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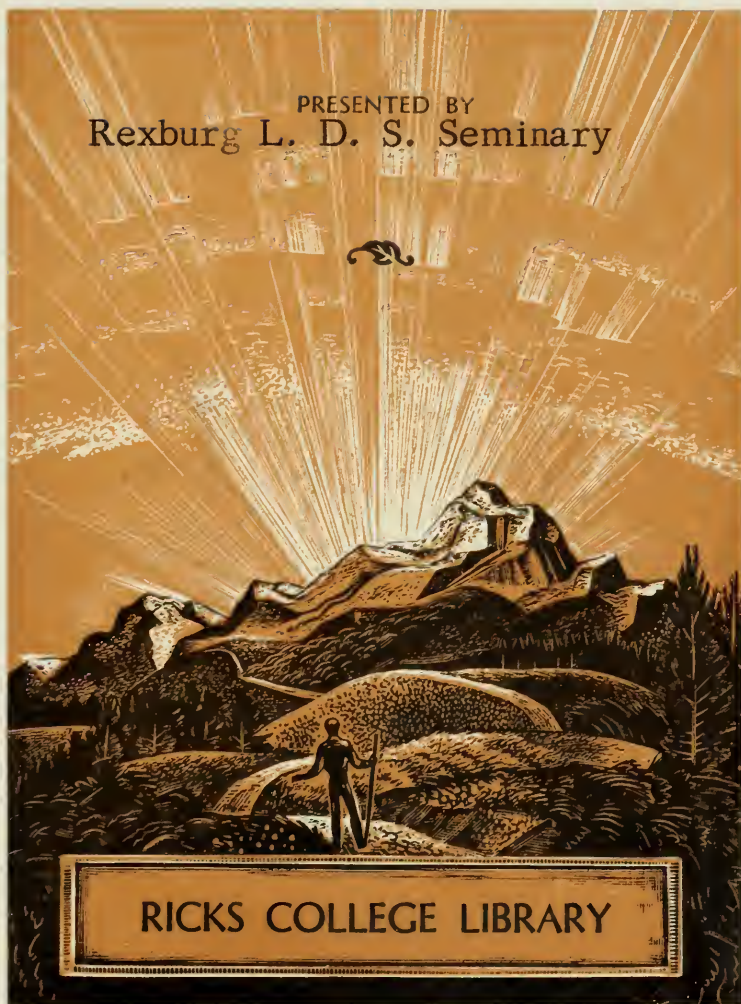
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Course *of* Study

for the Quorums *of* the Priest-
hood *of* the Church *of* Jesus
Christ *of* Latter-day Saints

ELDERS

FIRST YEAR

Divine Authenticity *of the* Book *of* Mormon
Duties *of* Elders



Prepared and Issued

under the direction *of* the General Authorities *of* the Church
Salt Lake City, Utah

1909

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Preface

Need of a Definite Course of Study

To the presidents of quorums and other presiding authorities in the Church, the need of a definite course of study for the Priesthood has long been apparent. To supply this need Stake officers, and in not a few cases, bishoprics of wards have outlined yearly work for their respective quorums, and the result has been in these wide-awake stakes and wards renewed activity and a better attendance to duties by quorum members. With the view of aiding the quorums in systematic study and in the performance of their duties, a suggestive progressive course is now offered to the Priesthood throughout the Church. The hearty welcome given the movement by Stake Presidencies, High Councilors, Bishoprics, and Presidents of quorums shows that a long-felt need is now, at least, partially supplied.

General Committee Appointed

As stated above, for several years some organizations as well as individuals have been working to secure uniformity in quorum class work; but it was not until April 8, 1908, that a committee was appointed to outline a systematic course of study for the Church. In harmony with the instructions relative to the work and duties of the Aaronic Priesthood given by Pres. Joseph F. Smith at the general conference April 4, 1908, the Presiding Bishopric suggested that steps be taken to establish more uniformity among the quorums of the Lesser Priesthood. This request being right in harmony with the feeling of the General Authorities that more systematic and progressive work should be done in the higher priesthood of the stakes, a general Committee was appointed to prepare outlines for the High Priests, Elders, Priests, Teachers and Deacons, the Seventies to continue the course already prepared for them.

Agreeable to this appointment, a committee, whose names appear below, proceeded at once with the work assigned them.

Recommendations Adopted

At a special priesthood meeting held in the Assembly Hall, October 7, 1908, recommendations from this committee were presented and unanimously adopted, as follows:

First: "That presidents of stakes and bishops of wards make special efforts to get every worthy member ordained to the Priesthood, and properly enrolled in the quorum in which he can do the most efficient service to the Church."

Second: "That in every ward a weekly Priesthood meeting be held on Monday night, commencing on the first Monday in 1909."

Bishop to Take Charge

At these weekly Monday night meetings the bishop will preside; but, of course, when any of the stake authorities be present, the bishop will consult their wishes in regard to the conducting of the exercises, etc.

Time of Meeting

The time to begin the meeting is optional, each ward choosing that hour which is most convenient to the majority of the Priesthood. It is suggested, however, that the meetings be not made so long that they will become tedious. One hour and forty-five minutes properly utilized will generally be ample time for these weekly meetings, and one hour of this should be devoted to quorum work.

Order of Business in General Assembly

All the quorums will meet in general assembly for opening exercises; and as a means to expedite business in this meeting, the following order of procedure is suggested:

First: Excuses and roll call of officers. (This should include the bishoprics, ward clerk, presidencies of quorums, class instructors other than the presidencies, and class secretaries.)

Second: Singing.

Third: Prayer

Fourth: Singing practice (fifteen minutes).

Fifth: Notices and instructions from presidency of the stake, high councilors, or others who may be present in official capacity.

Sixth: Separation for quorum work.

Order of Business in the Quorums or Parts of Quorums

After adjournment for quorum work, the president will take charge of all business of the quorum, and conduct the opening and closing exercises. The following order of business in the quorums or parts of quorums may be found helpful.:

First: Excuses and roll call of officers and members.

Second: Minutes.

Third: Unfinished business.

Fourth: Class work.

a Part One, in course of study.

b Consideration and assignment of duties for the week. (Whether the quorums or parts of quorums re-assemble before the adjournment of the meeting is to be left to the discretion of the presiding authorities.)

Fifth: Singing.

Sixth: Benediction.

Lesson Suggestions

It should be remembered by all that a dry list of topics, no matter how well planned or skilfully arranged, will not make class work interesting. Each outline as it appears here is but a lifeless form. It remains for the teacher to give to this form animation, energy, spirit. "As the body

without the spirit is dead," so this course of study without earnest application and preparation will also be dead.

"Wherefore let every man learn his duty, and to act in office in which he is appointed, in all diligence."

"He that is slothful shall not be counted worthy to stand, and he that learns not his duty and shows himself not approved, shall not be counted worthy to stand."—*Doc. & Cov.*, 107: 99, 100.

The General Committee

Rudger Clawson
 David O. McKay
 Charles W. Nibley
 Orrin P. Miller
 David A. Smith
 Edward H. Anderson
 Nephi Anderson
 Stephen L. Richards
 Sylvester D. Bradford
 John M. Mills
 Joseph B. Keeler
 David O. Willey, Jr.
 Charles C. Richard
 Henry H. Blood
 Joseph J. Cannon
 P. Joseph Jensen

Introduction

The Elders' Course of Study for 1909 consists of thirty-six lessons on—

Part One: "The Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon" and—

Part Two: "Consideration of Elders' Practical Duties"

Part One is a series of outlines based on "A New Witness for God," Vol. II., by Elder Brigham H. Roberts. It is designed that this excellent treatise on the divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon be taken up by the Elders as home study. To do this every Elder should get the "New Witness for God," Vol. II., or copies of the M. I. A. Manual, numbers 7, 8, and 9. (As an aid to those who may have neither the Manuals nor the book, and who may meet with some delay in getting them, extracts are printed in the first six lessons of the "Outline." It is believed that during the first six weeks every Elder will have ample opportunity to secure the necessary books for home reading.) With these books at hand, each one should determine to read a chapter every week, following the outlines in Part One of the Course of Study, as helps and guides.

Suggestive Treatment in the Class

The lessons are too long to be studied or even considered at much length in the class; so it is suggested that Part One be given by the lecture method; that is, let some member of the quorum give a fifteen or twenty minute talk on the lesson. All members having previously read the chapter in the text at home, will be prepared not only to assist the speaker by intelligent attention, but also to receive a clearer knowledge of the points considered.

The steps, then, in the preparation will be: first, home study; second, practice in speaking or intelligent listening; third, a few minutes discussion on difficult questions.

Part Two is made up of a series of thirty-six outlines on Practical Duties, as follows:

First: The Melchisedek Priesthood.

Second: The Elders' Quorum.

Third: Privileges and Duties of the Elder.

Fourth: Ward Duties of the Elder.

Fifth: Stake Duties of the Elder.

Sixth: Family Duties of the Elder.

Seventh: Life and Conduct of the Elder.

Each topic in the outlines should be freely considered in the class, the instructor leading out with appropriate questions, and guiding the members in a wise discussion of their duties.

No class should be dismissed without having had a definite assignment of some official and personal duty to be performed or introduced into daily life during the week. In some lessons suggestive duties are named, but others more applicable to local conditions should be taken up whenever those in authority think best to do so. If too many topics be suggested, consider only the most important. Let thoroughness be the guide rather than extensiveness.

Remember, it is living the Gospel that makes Elders worthy the name. It is the doing of the Father's will that brings the testimony. Let the Elders' motto be—

LEARN YOUR DUTY, THEN DO IT



ELDERS

COURSE OF STUDY

1909

Part One: The Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon

Part Two: Duties of Elders

LESSON ONE

PART ONE

The Bible in the Nineteenth Century

References: "New Witness for God," Vol. II, Chap. 1.
M. I. A. Manual, No. 7.

- I Attacks Made On The Bible.
 - A By unbelievers.
 - B By pretended friends.
- II How Various Writers Account for the Books of the Bible.
- III Stories of Uninspired Origin Considered.
 - A Arise from false impressions of the Bible.
- IV Discoveries Which Support the Bible.
 - A Rosetta Stone.
 - B Customs of the people.
- V Researches in Palestine.
 - A Translations from ruins found there.
 - 1 Creation.
 - 2 the Sabbath.
 - 3 Garden of Eden.
 - 4 Flood.
 - 5 Abram.

- 6 Campaign of Chedorlaomer.
- 7 Shishak's invasion of Judah.
- 8 The Moabite Stone.

Suggestive Truth: Truth will triumph in the end.

PART TWO

Subject: The Priesthood

I What the Priesthood Is.

A Power to officiate in things pertaining to God. See Notes 1 and 2.

- 1 "hood" is a suffix denoting state, quality, character; so priesthood means specifically, having the state, quality or character of a priest.
- 2 A priest is, in a general sense, "one who is fully authorized to be a minister of sacred things."
- 3 In the Church of Jesus Christ it is the duty of every one who holds the priesthood to perform certain religious acts for the benefit or convenience of the members of the church, and for the advancement and growth of the Church.
- 4 Heb. v; 1. Every High Priest "taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins."

B Difference between Priesthood and Priestcraft.

- 1 Priesthood defined above.
- 2 Definitions of Priestcraft.
 - a "Priestly policy or system of management based on temporal or material interests; the arts practised by selfish and ambitious priests to gain wealth and power, or to impose on the credulity of others."—*Standard*.

Assignment: Show that the service rendered in temporal affairs by those holding the Priesthood is not *Priestcraft*.

- a In building houses of worship.
- b In promoting education.
- c In fostering industries for the good of the community.
- d In foreign missionary work.
- e In personal advice respecting financial and temporal affairs.

Let us defend our Priesthood against insinuations of priestcraft.

NOTES, PART ONE

The Bible in the Nineteenth Century.

“The Bible in the Nineteenth Century” will yet form an interesting subject for a volume. The writer of it will recount the attacks made upon the sacred volume by unbelievers, and the defense of it by faithful Christian and Jewish scholars. He will also be under the necessity of writing the history of the betrayals of the Holy Scriptures by pretended friends; and he will say such betrayals were more mischievous than the attacks of avowed enemies. He will balance the harm done by the attacks and the betrayals against the good accomplished by the defenses, and give the net result of gain or loss. Which will preponderate? The nineteenth century was prolific in both assaults and defenses; and much valuable material was collected from unexpected quarters for the latter, but for all that it is doubtful if in what is recognized as the Christian world the faith of Christians in the Bible as the veritable word of God is as sound and absolute at the close of the nineteenth century as it was at the commencement of it. This is not saying that what is regarded as old fashioned faith in the Bible has been entirely banished, or totally eclipsed. There are those, and many of them, thank God, who still revere the Bible as the word of God, and therefore hold it true, and take it as a lamp to their feet, as a guide to their path. But there has arisen within Christendom itself—and chiefly within the nineteenth century—a class of Bible scholars who have done much mischief to faith in the Bible; who have betrayed it; who make it part of their boast that in their study of the Bible they have dropped the theological attitude towards it; viz., the pre-conception that the Bible is the word of God, on which conception men were wont to reason: God is a God of absolute truth; the Bible is the word of God; therefore the Bible is absolutely true. This position they abandon and take up what they are pleased to call the “literary

attitude or method." That is, they approach the Bible without any pre-conception whatsoever. They take up the collection of books forming the Bible just as they would take up any other body of literature; as they would English, French, or German literature. "This method," says one high in authority in the new school of critics, "assumes nothing. It leaves the conclusion of the questions whether the Bible came from God, in what sense it came from God, how far and to what extent it came from God, all to be determined by examination of the book itself. This I call the literary method." "This method," says another, "leads to the investigation of the origin, authorship, and meaning of the several books of the Bible, and the credibility of the history which it contains."

Another recognized authority in the same field of learning in summing up the results of the so-called "Higher Criticism," says:

"It has thus far done an inestimable service in the removal of the traditional theories from the sacred books, so that they may be studied in their real structure and character. * * * * * The higher criticism shows us the process by which the sacred books were produced, that the most of them were composed by unknown authors, that they have passed through the hands of a considerable number of unknown editors who have brought together the older material without removing discrepancies, inconsistencies and errors. In this process of editing, arranging, addition, subtraction, reconstruction and consolidation, extending through many centuries, what evidence have we that these unknown editors were kept from error in all their work?"^a

Such dissecting as this can have but one general result—death of reverence for the Bible—death of faith in it, as the revealed word of God. The authenticity of the Bible by it is left doubtful; for while this method of criticism succeeds, with those who affect it, in proving that Moses is not the author of the five books for so many centuries accredited to him, it fails to tell us who is the author of those books. This Higher Criticism with some show of arrogance tells us that there are two and perhaps more, authors of the book of Isaiah's prophecies; that the last twenty-seven chapters were not written by the great Hebrew prophet whose name the book bears; but it fails to tell us who is the author of them. How can it be determined even when the unknown author lived. The same is true as to the other books of the Old Testament upon whose authenticity this system casts its shadow. The system is wholly destructive in its tendencies; it unsettles everything, it determines nothing, except that everything with reference to the authenticity, time of composition, inspiration, and credibility of the Old Testament is indeterminable. "It leaves

^a "Truthfulness of Scripture," a paper submitted to "The World's Parliament of Religion by Professor Chas. A. Briggs, D. D. See World's Parliament of Religions (Barrows) Vol. I. p. 563.

everything hanging in the air" says one able critic of Higher Criticism. "It begins in guesses and ends in fog. At all events the result leaves us in a hopeless muddle, and when that is the only thing settled, the proposed solution is self-condemned."^b And yet the Doctor of Divinity who wrote that sentence, Rev. A. F. J. Behrends, when he comes in his treatise to remark upon the extent to which the destructive criticism obtains; has to confess that in eight of the most famous German Universities ^c possessing theological faculties, and numbering seventy-three professors in all, thirty of those professors upheld and taught the destructive criticism; while forty-three were counted conservatives. ^d

In the year 1799 a French officer named Boussrad discovered a large black basalt stone at Fort St. Julian near Rosetta in the delta of the Nile. From the circumstances of the discovery being near Rosetta it has always been known as the "Rosetta Stone." It was inscribed in Greek, in Egyptian hieroglyphics, and a third class of writing which is called Demotic. The last is the common writing of the people as opposed to the hieroglyphic which was written by the priests. The Greek upon the stone was readily made out, and it was found to consist of a decree drawn up by the priests of Memphis in honor of Ptolemy Epiphanes, who ruled about 198 B. C. It was at once evident that the Greek inscription on this stone was the translation of the hieroglyphics upon it, and hence afforded a key to the interpretation of the Egyptian hieroglyphics. By the fortunes of war the Rosetta Stone was surrendered by the French to General Hutchinson and subsequently presented to the British Museum where it is now preserved. Accurate copies of the three-fold text were made forthwith and distributed among the scholars of Europe with the result that through the combined patient labors of Silvestre de Sacy, Akerbald the Swede, Thomas Young, Champollion, Lepsius in Germany, Birch in England, and others, the hieroglyphics were deciphered and a system of translation constructed which enabled European scholars to read many of the inscriptions upon the monuments of Egypt, and bring to light much of the history of that country which hitherto had been a mystery. This gave an impetus to research. The political representatives of the great countries of Europe made collections of antiquities in Egypt, and travelers spent much time and money in opening tombs and digging out ruins. The tombs have given up not only their dead, but with them the books which the Egyptians read, the furniture which they used in their houses, the ornaments and articles of the toilet of the Egyptian lady, the weapons of the warrior, the tools of the handicraftsman and the laborer, the dice of the gambler, the toys of the children, and

^b Rev. A. J. F. Behrends D. D., Bible Criticism and its Methods, course of lectures, 1897.

^c These are the Universities of Berlin, Bonn, Breslau, Greifswald, Halle, Königsberg, Leipzig and Tübingen.

^d This was the condition in 1897.

the portrait, statues and figures of the men and women for whom they were made. The many-lined inscriptions upon the tombs give us their ideas about the future world, the judgment of the dead, the paradise of happy souls, the transmigration of souls, and they enable us to place a juster estimate upon the statements of those Greek writers who profess to understand and to describe with accuracy the difficult religion of the educated Egyptians. And the result of all this as affecting the authenticity of the Bible. Simply this: the manners, customs, governments, arts, sciences, occupations and state of civilization of the Egyptians in general, are demonstrated by these monuments to be substantially what they are described to be in the book of Genesis. Also there is supposed to be the confirmation of special events in the scripture narrative. Professor A. H. Sayce, for instance, has the following upon the existence of such a line of kings ruling at Jerusalem as Melchizedek is described to be in Genesis:

"Among the cuneiform tablets found at Tel el-Amarna in Upper Egypt, are letters to the Pharaoh from Ebed-tob, king of Jerusalem, written a century before the time of Moses. In them he describes himself as appointed to the throne, not by inheritance from his father or mother (compare Heb. 7, 3), but by the arm of 'the Mighty King,' i. e. of the god whose temple stood on Mount Moriah. He must therefore have been a priest-king like Melchisedek. The name of Jerusalem is written Uru-Salim, 'the city of the god of peace,' and it was the capital of a territory which extended southward to Kellah. In the inscriptions of Ramses II. and Ramses III., Salem is mentioned among the conquests of the Egyptian kings."

The same writer sees confirmation of the history of Joseph, son of Jacob, in the following circumstance:

The "story of the Two Brothers," an Egyptian romance written for the son of the Pharaoh of the oppression, contains an episode very similar to the Biblical account of Joseph's treatment by Potiphar's wife. Potiphar and Potipherah are the Egyptian Pa-tu-pa-Ra, 'the gift of the Sun-god.' The name given to Joseph, Zaphnath-paaneah, (Gen. xli: 45), is probably the Egyptian Zaf-nti-pa-anekh, 'nourisher of the living one,' i. e. of the Pharaoh. There are many instances in the inscriptions of foreigners in Egypt receiving Egyptian names, and rising to the highest offices of state."

The story of the Exodus as related in the Bible is supposed to find confirmation in the following:

"The cuneiform tablets found at Tel el-Amarna, in Upper Egypt, have shown that in the latter days of the eighteenth Egyptian dynasty, when the Pharaoh had become a convert to an Asiatic form of faith, the highest offices of state were absorbed by foreigners, most of whom were Canaanites. In the national reaction which followed, the foreigners were expelled, exterminated, or reduced to serfdom; while a new dynasty, the nineteenth, was founded by

Ramses I. He, therefore, must be the 'new king who knew not Joseph' (Exodus i, 8). His grandson, Ramses II., was the builder of Pa-Tum or Pithom (now Tel el-Maskhuteh, near Ismailia), as has been proved by Dr. Naville's researches, and consequently, as Egyptian students had long maintained, he must have been the Pharaoh of the oppression."

The occupancy of the land of Goshen by the Isrealites who, it will be remembered, were shepherds, is supposed to receive confirmation in the following:

"Further excavations of Dr. Neville have shown that Goshen, the Egyptian Goshem (now Saft el-Henneh), is the modern Wadi Tumilat, between Zagazig and Ismailla. A despatch dated in the eighth year of the reign of Meneptah, the son and successor of Ramses II., states that Bedouin from Edom has been allowed to pass the Khetam or 'fortress' in the district of Succouth (Thukot), in order to feed themselves and their herds on the possessions of Pharaoh.' Khetam is the Etham of Exodus 13, 20. The geography of the exodus agrees remarkably with that of the Egyptian papyri of the time of Ramses II. and his son."

Translations from ruins in Palestine:—

Creation: One of the accounts of creation in cuneiform characters found on the tablets very nearly resembles the first chapter of Genesis. It commences with the statement that "in the beginning" all was a chaos of waters, called the deep (Tiamat, the Hebrew *tehom*) Then the Upper and Lower Firmaments were created, and God came into existence. After that comes a long account of the struggle between Bel-Merodach and the "Dragon" of chaos, or "Tiamat," "the serpent of evil," with her allies, the forces of anarchy and darkness. It ended in the victory of the God of light, who thereupon created the present world by the power of his "word." The fifth tablet or book of the poem describes the appointment of the heavenly bodies for signs and seasons, and the sixth (or perhaps the seventh) the creation of animals and reptiles. The latter part of the poem, in which the creation of man was doubtless described, has not yet been recovered. But we learn from other texts that man was regarded as having been formed out of the "dust" of the ground.

The Sabbath: From the tablets it is also learned that the Babylonians observed a day of rest, which is called Sabbattu and described as "a day of rest for the heart." On it, it was forbidden to eat cooked meat, to put on fresh clothes, to offer sacrifices, to ride in a chariot, etc. The Sabattu fell on the 7th, 14th, 19th, 21st, and 28th days of the month.

The Garden of Eden: The "plain" of Babylonia was called Edin in the ancient Sumerian language of the country, and the word was adopted by the Semitic Babylonians, in the form of Edinu. Eridu, the early seaport of Babylonia, was the chief center of prim-

itive Babylonian religion and culture, and in its neighborhood was a garden, wherein, "in a holy place," according to an ancient poem, was a mysterious tree whose roots were planted in the "deep," while its branches reached to heaven. The tree of life is often represented in Assyrian sculptures between two winged cherubim who have sometimes the heads of eagles, sometimes of men, and sometimes stand, sometimes kneel. Eri-Aku or Arioch (Gen. xiv: 1) calls himself "the executor of the oracle of the holy tree of Eridu." In Sumerian, wine was called *ges-din*, "the draught of life." A second tree is mentioned in Babylonian hymns on whose heart the name of the god of wisdom is said to be inscribed.

The Flood: In 1872 George Smith discovered the Babylonian account of the deluge, which strikingly resembles that of Genesis. It is contained in a long poem which was composed in the time of Abraham, but the Chaldean tradition of the deluge, of which flush the account in the poem is but one out of many, must go back to a very much earlier date. Xisuthros, the Chaldean Noah, was rescued along with his family, servants, and goods, on account of his righteousness. The god Ea warned him in a dream of the coming flood, and ordered him to build a ship, into which he should take every kind of animal so that "the seed of life" might be preserved.

Ur of the Chaldees: This was the early home of Abraham and his forefathers spoken of in Genesis (xiii 27-32). It was situated on the west side of the Euphrates. The name means "the city" in Babylonia. It was the seat of a dynasty of kings who reigned before the age of Abraham and was famous for its temple of the moon-god, whose other famous temple was at Haran in Mesopotamia.

Abram: Contract-tablets show that in the age of Abraham Canaanites—or "Amorites," as the Babylonians called them—were settled in Babylonia, and that a district outside the walls of Sippara had been assigned to them. Several of the names are distinctively Hebrew, and in a tablet dated in the reign of the grandfather of Amraphel (Gen. 14, 1), one of the witnesses is called "the Amorite, the son of Abi-ramu," or Abram.

Campaign of Chedorlaomer: The records on the tablets prove that this event described in Genesis xiv is proved to be in accordance with the national movements of that age.

Shishak's Invasion of Judah: On the Southern wall of the temple of Karnak, Shishak (Shashang in Egypt) the founder of the twenty-second Egyptian dynasty, has given a list of the places he captured in Palestine. Most of them were in Judea, but there are a few (e. g. Megiddo and Taanach) which belonged to the northern kingdom.

The Moabite Stone: The Moabite stone was discovered by Rev. F. Klein, at Dibhan in the land of Moab, on August 19, 1868. It

measures three feet ten inches, by two feet, by one foot two inches; and is inscribed with thirty-four lines of text. The language of the inscription hardly differs from Hebrew in vocabulary, grammar, or expression. The stone gives the Moabite account of the war of Mesha, king of Moab, about 860 B. C., against Omri, Ahab, and other kings of Israel, and confirms to quite an extent the history of the same war as given in II Kings, chapter iii. *e*

Very naturally those believers in the Bible who regard it as the word of God, because its writers were inspired by the Spirit of the Lord, and therefore conveyed to mankind the word and will of God; those believers who regard the Bible's statements as substantially true, allowing only for such errors as may have crept in through carelessness of copyists, or perchance here and there an error through additions or omissions on the part of copyists or designing custodians—such believers rejoice at the confirmation the scriptures receive from the inscriptions upon monuments and tablets brought to light by the researches and scholarship of the nineteenth century. It is a pious sentiment, this rejoicing over the confirmation of the word of God; and one can only regret that the evidences supplied by these modern discoveries are not sufficiently voluminous or explicit to silence altogether the unbelief of modern times in the Bible. But they are not sufficient; for in spite of them unbelievers not only exist in Christian lands, but increase daily.

e The foregoing statements of monumental testimony to the truth of the Old Testament are condensed from an article of Prof. A. H. Sayce's, LL. D. The whole article—too long to be inserted here—will be found in the Nelson Illustrated Bible Treasury, p. 39-44

NOTES, PART TWO.

Note 1: "Priesthood is nothing more nor less than the power of God delegated to man, by which man can act in the earth for the salvation of the human family in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and act legitimately."
(Joseph F. Smith in the 75th Semi-Annual Conference Report, p. 5.)

Note 2: "There is also a tendency among the youth, and I'm sorry to say, among some of the older ones, to show but little regard for the sacredness of the Holy Priesthood. What I mean by the Holy Priesthood is, that authority which God has delegated to man by which he may speak the will of God as though the Angels were here to speak it themselves; by which men are empowered to bind on earth, and it shall be bound in heaven, and to loose on earth, and it shall be loosed in heaven; by which the words of men, spoken in the exercise of that power, become the word of the Lord, the law

of God unto the people, scripture, and divine commands. / It is, therefore, not good that the Latter Day Saints, should treat lightly this sacred principle of authority which has been revealed from the heavens in the dispensation in which we live. It is the Authority by which the Lord Almighty governs His people, and by which, in time to come, He will govern the nations of the world. It is sacred and it must be held sacred by the people. It should be honored and respected by them in whomsoever it is held, and upon whomsoever responsibility is placed in the church. The young men and young women and the people generally, should honor this principle and recognize it as something that is sacred and cannot be trifled with or spoken lightly of with impunity. Disregard of this authority leads to darkness and apostacy, and severance from all the rights and privileges of the house of God; for it is by virtue of this authority that the ordinances of the Gospel are performed throughout the world and in every sacred place and without which they cannot be performed. Those also, who hold this authority, should honor it in themselves. They should live it so as to be worthy of the authority vested in them, and worthy of the gifts that have been bestowed upon them."

(Joseph F. Smith, 72nd Semi-Annual Conference Pamphlet, p. 2.)

LESSON TWO

PART ONE

The Witness of the Western Hemisphere

Reference: "New Witness for God," Vol. II, Chap. 2.

I Did God leave evidence of Himself on the Eastern Hemisphere only?

A Common origin of all men.

B Apparent knowledge of some Bible facts by the aborigines of America.

II Value of the Book of Mormon as a witness for the Bible

A Book of Ether.

1 Account of Adam's time.

2 Comparison of languages.

3 Scattering of people.

- B History of the Nephites' leaving Jerusalem.
 - 1 The five Books of Moses.
 - 2 Jacob and Joseph.
 - 3 Prophets and prophecies.
 - 4 Isaiah.
- C Frequent reference made to the Brass Plates.
 - 1 Passage of the Red Sea.
 - 2 Bondage in Egypt, etc.
- D Book of Mormon as a whole.
 - 1 Dealings of God with Book of Mormon peoples.
 - 2 "More nations than one."
- E Book of Mormon witness for Jesus Christ.
 - 1 Prophecies.
 - 2 Signs of His coming and of His death.
 - 3 Christ's teaching on the Western Continent and His many miracles.

Suggestive Truth : God is not a respecter of persons.

PART TWO

Subject : Melchisedek Priesthood

- I Why called Melchisedek? (Doc. & Cov. Sec. 107: 2-4)
- II History. (Doc. & Cov. Sec. 2.)
 - A Its delegation.
 - B Its sacredness.
- III Power.
 - A How acquired. (Doc. & Cov. Sec. 121: 36-46 and Sec. 107: 30:32.)

Assignment : How do the following habits and characteristics affect the acquisition of the power of the Melchisedek Priesthood: Purity of life? Neglect of prayer? Smoking? Profanity? Attendance to duty? Idleness, etc.?

NOTES, PART ONE

The Witness of the Western Hemisphere.

One thing with reference to modern discoveries of confirmatory evidences of the Bible is singular. That one thing is the fact that all these modern discoveries of evidences are confined to the eastern half of the world, to Asia and Africa. Can it be that God left no witnesses for himself in the western half of the world? Did he ignore and leave to perish without spiritual enlightenment, or knowledge of any means of salvation, all those tribes of men, those nations and empires that inhabited the western hemisphere through so many ages? It should be remembered while considering these questions that the scriptures teach that

“God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if happily they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also His offspring.”^a

First: First in chronological order, if not in importance, is the book of Ether within the book of Mormon. This Book of Ether is an abridgment of a very ancient American record that was engraven upon twenty-four gold plates by a prophet named Ether, hence the name of the book. He wrote his record most likely in the early part of the sixth century B. C. The plates were discovered by a branch of the Nephite nation about 120 years B. C., and were preserved by the Nephites with other sacred records, which finally were placed in the keeping of a prophet named Moroni, about the close of the fourth century A. D. This Moroni is the one who translated the record engraven upon the plates of Ether, an abridgment of which he placed with the Book of Mormon. The book of Ether contained an account of the most ancient events from the creation of Adam to the confusion of languages; but as Moroni supposed the information of this part of the book of Ether would be in the possession of the Jews, he did not transcribe that part of it, but began his abridgment from the confounding of the languages at Babel. The book of Ether speaks of one Jared and his brother, the latter a most remarkable prophet living at Babel previous to the confusion of languages, and to whom the Lord revealed his intention of confounding the language of the people. At the solicitation of Jared, to whom he had imparted the knowledge of the coming calamity, this prophet besought the Lord that the language of Jared, himself, and their families might not be confounded, and the Lord had respect unto his prayer and confounded not their language; but directed

^a Acts, xvii; 26-28.

the formation of a colony consisting of Jared, his brother, and their families and friends which the Lord led forth from Babylon and finally brought to the north continent of the western hemisphere. The colony grew into a great nation occupying at least the greater part of North America, and were known to the Nephites as the people of Jared.

The book of Ether confirms the special particulars of the Bible concerning there being in existence a record of the creation; the existence of Adam; the erection of the tower of Babel; the confounding of language; and the scattering of the people into all the lands of the earth.

Second: Six hundred years before Christ, a prophet of the Lord named Lehi, being warned of the destruction of Jerusalem, departed with his family into the wilderness traveling southward from the Holy City until he reached the borders of the Red Sea: and while camped on its shores he received direction from the Lord that his sons should return to Jerusalem and obtain a certain record in the hands of one Laban, containing a record of the Jews and also the genealogy or Lehi's forefathers engraven upon plates of brass. Agreeable to the heavenly commandment the sons returned and after overcoming some difficulties finally succeeded in securing the records and returning with them to the encampment of Lehi. Finally when Lehi's colony embarked for America they brought those records with them. These records are thus described by Nephi, son of Lehi, who engraved the description in his record at least as early as the first quarter of the sixth century B. C. :

"And after they (Lehi's colony) had given thanks unto the God of Isreal, my father, Lehi, took the records which were engraven upon the plates of brass and he did search them from the beginning and he beheld that they did contain the five books of Moses, which gave an account of the creation of the world, and also of Adam and Eve, who were our first parents; and also a record of the Jews from the beginning, even down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah; and also the prophesies of the Holy prophets, from the beginning even down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah, and also many prophesies which have been spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah.

And it came to pass that my father, Lehi, also found upon the plates of brass, a genealogy of his fathers; wherefore he knew that he was a descendant of Joseph; yea, even that Joseph who was the son of Jacob, who was sold into Egypt, and who was preserved by the hand of the Lord, that he might preserve his father, Jacob, and all his household from perishing with famine. And they were also led out of captivity and out of the land of Egypt, by that same God who preserved them. And thus my father, Lehi, did discover the genealogy of his fathers." (I. Nephi v; 10-16.)

Third: Since the Nephites then, in this collection of brass plates, had the five books of Moses and the writings of the prophets down to the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah, it is to be expected that in their own record-making frequent reference would be made to the brass plates and their contents, and this is the case. The first Nephi speaks of Israel's passage of the Red Sea, under the leadership of Moses; and the destruction of the Egyptian army.^b Subsequently the same writer refers to the captivity of the children of Israel in Egypt, and the grievousness of their bondage; of their escape from their slavery; their being fed with manna in the wilderness; their being miraculously provided with water from the smitten rock; the visible presence of God in the cloud by day and the pillar of light by night; the blind and rebellious spirit of the people; the judgment of God upon them in the fiery-flying serpents and the healing provided for them by looking upon the brazen serpent erected by Moses.^c

It was much in this manner and for the same purpose that God dealt with His people in the eastern world; and the fact that His course with the people on the western hemisphere was substantially the same as that followed with those of the East, establishes at once His justice and mercy towards His children, and bears testimony to the great truths that indeed God is no respecter of persons, and that in every land He raises up for Himself witnesses of His power and goodness. Or, as it is so nobly said in the Book of Mormon itself, representing the Lord as addressing those who seek to limit the revealed word of God to one nation, or people, or period of time:

"Know ye not that there are more nations than one? Know ye not that I, the Lord your God, have created all men, and that I remember those who are upon the isles of the sea; and that I rule in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath; and I bring forth my word unto the children of men, yea, even upon all the nations of the earth? * * * * *

Know ye not that the testimony of two nations is a witness unto you that I am God, that I remember one nation like unto another? Wherefore, I speak the same words unto one nation like unto another. And when the two nations shall run together, the testimony of the two nations shall run together also. And I do this that I may prove unto many, that I am the same yesterday, today, and forever; and that I speak forth my words according to mine own pleasure. And because that I have spoken one word, ye need not suppose that I cannot speak another; for my work is not yet finished; neither shall it be, until the end of man; neither from that time henceforth and for ever. * * * * * For I command all men both in the east and in the west, and in the north, and in the south, and in the islands of the sea, that they shall write the words which I speak unto

^b I. Nephi, iv; 2.

^c I. Nephi, xvii; 3-42.

them: for out of the books which shall be written, I will judge the world, every man according to his works, according to that which is written. For behold, I will speak unto the Jews, and they shall write it; and I will also speak unto the Nephites, and they shall write it; and I will also speak unto the other tribes of the house of Israel, which I have led away, and they shall write it; and I will also speak unto all nations of the earth, and they shall write it. And it shall come to pass that the Jews shall have the words of the Nephites, and the Nephites shall have the words of the Jews; and the Nephites and the Jews shall have the words of the lost tribes of Israel; and the lost tribes of Israel shall have the words of the Nephites and the Jews. And it shall come to pass that my people which are of the house of Israel, shall be gathered home unto the lands of their possessions, and my word also shall be gathered in one.^d

Fourth: It is not alone as a witness for the authenticity and credibility of the Bible, that the Book of Mormon is valuable. Great as is the value in that particular it is still more valuable as a witness for the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Previous to the coming of Messiah the Nephites ^e and Lamanite prophets testified of His coming; predicted the time thereof and the signs that would accompany His advent. The signs of his birth were, first, that on the night of His nativity there would be no darkness upon the lands inhabited by the Nephites; that is, in the western hemisphere. "There shall be one day and a night and a day," said one of the prophets, "as if it were one day, and there were no night, and this shall be unto you for a sign, for ye shall know of the rising of the sun and also of its setting, therefore they shall know of as surety that there shall be two days and a night. Nevertheless the night shall not be darkened and it shall be the night before He is born." ^f Second: A new star was to rise "such an one as ye never have beheld" said the prophet to the Nephites, "and this also shall be a sign unto you." ^g Third: "Many signs and wonders in heaven," but the nature of which is not stated by the prophet.^h

Signs also of His death were predicted. First, on the day He suffered death, the sun would be darkened and refuse to give his light, and also the moon and the stars; and darkness would cover the whole face of the Nephite lands, from the time He suffered death

^d II. Nephi, xxix; 7-14.

^e The Nephites were the followers of the first Nephi, the righteous son of Lehi, who led the colony from Jerusalem six hundred years B. C., and the Lamanites were the followers of Laman, the wicked son of the same Lehi.

^f Helaman, Chapter xiv.

^g Helaman, Chapter xiv.

^h This was Samuel, a prophet whom God raised up among the Lamanites. The above prophecies were uttered about five or six years B. C.

until His resurrection from the dead. Second, at the time of His dying there would be thunderings and lightnings; earthquakes would rend the rocks, lay mountains low and cast up valleys into mountain chains; the highways would be broken up and many cities be made desolate. Third, many graves would be opened and yield up their dead, and many Saints would be raised from the dead and appear to the living, who had not been destroyed in these judgments. These were the signs that were to give evidence to the people of the western world of the birth of the promised Christ, and of His death, and His resurrection; all of which things in due time, came to pass even as they were predicted. But what is better still, after the Christ's resurrection from the dead, and after these terrifying judgments had swept over the western land, destroying the more wicked part of the inhabitants, Jesus Himself appeared unto the Nephite people, then inhabiting the extreme northern part of South America, and this in fulfillment of His own declaration to His disciples at Jerusalem, when He said:

"Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." ⁱ

The Christ's appearance to the Nephites was first made to a multitude gathered about the temple in what was called the land of Bountiful, a district of country in the north part of South America, where the isthmus joins South with North America, and including most likely part of that isthmus. He descended out of heaven and stood in their midst, announcing Himself to be Jesus Christ, whom the prophets had testified would come into the world. "I am the light and the life of the world," said He, "and I have drunk out of that bitter cup which the Father hath given me, and have glorified the Father in taking upon me the sins of the world, in which I have suffered the will of the Father in all things from the beginning." And it came to pass that when Jesus had spoken these words the whole multitude fell to the earth for they remembered that it had

ⁱ John, x; 16. The usual explanation of this passage in John is that Jesus here makes reference to the Gentiles as being the "other sheep," (see Commentary, critical, and explanatory, by Revs. Jamieson, Fausset and Brown on John, 7; 16). But Jesus when importuned even by His apostles to heed the prayers of the Canaanitish woman in the coasts of Tyre, said unto them: "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Therefore when He says in John, "other sheep I have which are not of this fold: them also I must bring and they shall hear my voice and there shall be one fold and one shepherd," He certainly had reference to some branch of the house of Israel and not to the Gentiles; and therefore when He came after His resurrection to the Nephites, who were a branch of the house of Israel, He fulfilled His own declared intention to the apostles at Jerusalem. (See III. Nephi, xv; 16-24.)

been prophesied among them that Christ would show Himself unto them after His ascension into heaven. At the commandment of Jesus the multitude arose and came to him and beheld the wounds in His side and in His hands. When they had all gone forth and witnessed for themselves that He was indeed the Christ, they cried out with one accord, "Hosanna, Hosanna, blessed be the name of the most high God" And they did fall down at the feet of Jesus and worshipped Him.

After this Jesus continued ministering among them for some time. Just how long He remained or how many times He appeared to them cannot be determined from the Book of Mormon. Neither is that a matter of any great importance, but it is important that He chose twelve disciples and conferred upon them divine authority to administer the ordinances of the Gospel. He proclaimed Himself to be, as will be seen from what has been said, the Son of God. He also taught that His Father, Himself, and the Holy Ghost constituted one God-head; that men to be saved must believe in God, repent of their sins, receive baptism for the remission of sins and the baptism of the Holy Ghost in order to establish complete fellowship and oneness between themselves and God and His Christ. The twelve were authorized to call to their assistance subordinate officers and organize those who accepted the Gospel into the Holy Church of Christ. In addition to these doctrinal instructions Jesus delivered also the high moral and spiritual precepts of the Gospel, delivered much in the same form as they are found in our New Testament scriptures, and to a great extent in the same phraseology; so much so that what is found in the Book of Mormon which so nearly conforms to the doctrines and moral precepts of the New Testament, becomes a mighty witness for the substantial correctness of what is recorded in the New Testament, so that the Book of Mormon is a witness of the truth not only of the Old Testament but very largely also of the New.

Among other things of importance which Jesus declared to the Nephites was the fact that it was His intention to visit "the lost tribes" of the house of Israel, reveal Himself to them, and proclaim the same gospel He had delivered to the Nephites, and spoke of the time when the testimonies of the Nephites and the lost tribes of the house of Israel with the testimony of those among whom He had labored in Judea should be brought together in one.

LESSON THREE

PART ONE

The Purposes for which the Book of Mormon was Written

Reference: "New Witness for God," Vol. II, Chap. 3.

- I Mormon's statement of his reasons for writing.
 - A As a witness unto the remnant of the house of Israel.
 - B To teach them covenants with the Lord.
 - C As a witness to the Jew and Gentile.
- II Reasons given in the Doctrine and Covenants.
 - A As a witness unto the remnants of the house of Israel
 - B That Lamanites might come to the knowledge of their fathers.
 - C To give Lamanites knowledge of the promises of God
- III Further testimony by Mormon.
- IV Summary of purposes.

Suggestive Truth: God in His mercy will not destroy any people without warning.

For Part Two of this lesson, see Lesson 4, Part Two.

NOTES, PART ONE**The Purposes for which the Book of Mormon was Written**

The several purposes for which the Book of Mormon was written are to be learned from the writers of the book itself, and from the revelations of God to Joseph Smith.

First I introduce the statement of Moroni, into whose hands was given Mormon's abridgment of the larger records of the Nephites, called the Book of Mormon. On the last plate of the collection given to Moroni by his father, on the left hand side of the collection, the language of the whole book running, as in the Hebrew, from right to left, Moroni engraved the following explanatory title to the record he sealed up, and therein also stated the reasons why the record was written. This Joseph Smith translated and made the title page of his translation of the Book of Mormon.

THE BOOK OF MORMON.

An Account Written by the Hand of Mormon, upon Plates taken from the Plates of Nephi.

Wherefore it is an abridgment of the record of the people of Nephi and also of the Lamanites; written to the Lamanites who are a remnant of the house of Israel; and also to Jew and Gentile; written by way of commandment, and also by the spirit of prophesy and revelation. Written and sealed up, and hid up unto the Lord, that they might not be destroyed; to come forth by the power of God unto the interpretation thereof; sealed by the hand of Moroni, and hid up unto the Lord, to come forth in due time by the way of Gentile; the interpretation thereof by the gift of God.

An abridgment taken from the Book of Ether also; which is a record of the people of Jared; who were scattered at the time the Lord confounded the language of the people when they were building a tower to get to heaven; which is to show unto the remnant of the house of Israel what great things the Lord hath done for their fathers; and that they may know the covenants of the Lord, that they are not cast off forever; and also to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God, manifesting Himself unto all nations. And now if there are faults, they are the mistakes of men; wherefore condemn not the things of God, that ye may be found spotless at the judgment seat of Christ.

In the above, three reasons are given why the Book of Mormon was written and preserved to come forth among men in the last days:

First, to show unto the remnant of the House of Israel what great things the Lord has done for their fathers.

Second, to teach them the covenants of the Lord made with their fathers, that the remnants may know that they are not cast off forever.

Third, that this record may convince both Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God, and that He manifests Himself to all nations.

In a revelation given to Joseph Smith in July, 1828, on the occasion of the Urim and Thummim being restored to him after it had been taken from him in consequence of allowing Martin Harris to have a portion of the manuscript of the Book of Mormon contrary to the will of God, the Lord said to him:

“My work shall go forth, for in as much as the knowledge of a Savior has come unto the world, through the testimony of the Jews, even so shall the knowledge of a Savior come unto my people, and to the Nephites, and to the Jacobites, and the Josephites, and the Zoramites, through the testimony of their fathers—and this testimony shall come to the knowledge of the Lamanites, and the Lemuelites, and the Ishmaelites who dwindled in unbelief, because of the iniquity of their fathers, whom the Lord has suffered to destroy their

brethren the Nephites, because of their iniquities and their abominations—and for this very purpose are these plates preserved which contain these records, that the promise of the Lord might be fulfilled, which He made to His people; and that the Lamanites might come to the knowledge of their fathers and that they might know the promises of the Lord, and that they may believe the gospel, and rely upon the merits of Jesus Christ, and be glorified through faith in His name, and that through repentance they might be saved.” (Doc & Cov., Sec. iii; 16-20.)

In this passage we have substantially the same reasons given why the Book of Mormon was written, though not stated in the same order, but as follows:

First, that a knowledge of the Savior might come unto the remnants of the house of Israel in the western hemisphere, who are called Nephites, Jacobites, Josephites, Lamanites, etc.

Second, that the Lamanites might come to a knowledge of their fathers.

Third, that the Lamanites might know the promises of the Lord, both to their fathers and to themselves.

Mormon also left upon record his testimony as to why the book which bears his name was written, and why it would be preserved and come forth in the last days. In his own book, by which I mean that book in which he wrote the things which he saw in his own day, Mormon says:

“Now these things are written unto the remnant of the house of Jacob; * * * * and behold they shall come forth according to the commandment of the Lord, when He shall see fit in his wisdom. And behold they shall go unto the unbelieving of the Jews; and for this intent shall they go; that they may be persuaded that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God; that the Father may bring about, through His most beloved, His great and eternal purpose, in restoring the Jews, or all the house of Israel, to the land of their inheritance, which the Lord their God hath given them, unto the fulfilling of His covenant; and also that the seed of this people *a* may more fully believe His Gospel, which shall go forth unto them from the Gentiles.” *b*

Again, this same writer, Mormon, addressing himself to the remnants of the Lamanites to whom, in the future, his record would come, says:

“Know ye that ye must come to the knowledge of your fathers, and repent of all your sins and iniquities, and believe in Jesus Christ,

a Mormon here refers to the Lamanites, that is, that the seed of the Lamanites, the present “Indians” of the western hemisphere, might more fully believe the Gospel, etc.

b Book of Mormon, Chapter v; 12-15

that He is the son of God, and that He was slain by the Jews, and by the power of the Father He hath risen again, whereby He hath gained the victory over the grave; and also in Him is the sting of death swallowed up. And He bringeth to pass the resurrection of the dead, whereby man must be raised to stand before His judgment seat. And He hath brought to pass the redemption of the world, whereby he that is found guiltless before Him at the judgment day, hath it given unto him to dwell in the presence of God in His kingdom, to sing ceaseless praises with the choirs above, unto the Father, and unto the Son, and unto the Holy Ghost, which are one God, in a state of happiness which hath no end. Therefore repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus, and lay hold upon the Gospel of Christ, which shall be set before you, not only in this record, but also in the record which shall come unto the Gentiles from the Jews,^c which record shall come from the Gentiles unto you. For behold, this ^d is written for the intent that ye may believe that;^e and if ye believe that, ye will believe this also; and if ye believe this, ye will know concerning your fathers, and also the marvelous works which were wrought by the power of God among them; and ye will also know that ye are a remnant of the seed of Jacob; therefore ye are numbered among the people of the first covenant." Mormon, vii; 5-10.

This passage is important because that in addition to assigning substantially the same reasons for the writing and coming forth of the Book of Mormon, as those before enumerated, it brings out the fact that the Book of Mormon was written also to be a witness for the Bible, to prove it true, for the language in the above passage—"lay hold upon the Gospe of Christ, which shall be set before you, not only in this record, but also in the record which shall come unto the Gentiles from the Jews, which record shall come from the Gentiles unto you"—makes plain reference to the Gible, the record which comes from the Jews to the Gentiles, and from the Gentiles to the remnant of the Lamanites whom Mormon was addressing. And then the language—"this ;meaning the Nephite record: is written for the intent that ye may believe that,"—makes it clear that the Book of Mormon is to become a witness for the truth of the Bible, the Jewish record, in other words, a witness for God.

This is also the testimony of the first Nephi. In vision he saw the advent of the Gentile races upon the western hemisphere. He saw their victories over the remnant of the seed of his brethren, the Lamanites. He then proceeds:

"And I beheld the Spirit of the Lord, that it was upon the Gentiles; that they did prosper, and obtain the land for their inheritance;

^c The Bible.

^d The Book of Mormon.

^e The Bible.

and I beheld that they were white, and exceeding fair and beautiful, like unto my people, before they were slain. And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld that the Gentiles had gone forth out of captivity, did humble themselves before the Lord; and the power of the Lord was with them; and I beheld that their mother Gentiles were gathered together upon the water, and upon the land also, to battle against them; and I beheld that the power of God was with them, and also that the wrath of God was upon all those that were gathered together against them to battle. And I, Nephi, beheld that the Gentiles that had gone out of captivity, were delivered by the power of God out of the hands of all other nations. And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld that they did prosper in the land; and I beheld a book, and it was carried forth among them. And the angel said unto me, knowest thou the meaning of the book? And I said unto him, I know not. And he said, behold it proceedeth out of the mouth of a Jew; and I, Nephi, beheld it; and he said unto me, the book that thou beholdest is a record of the Jews, which contains the covenants of the Lord which He hath made unto the house of Israel; and it also containeth many of the prophecies of the holy prophets; and it is a record like unto the engravings which are upon the plates of brass,^f save there are not so many; nevertheless, they contain the covenants of the Lord, which He hath made unto the house of Israel; wherefore, they are of great worth unto the Gentiles.

“And the angel of the Lord said unto me, thou hast beheld that the book proceedeth forth from the mouth of a Jew; and when it proceeded forth from the mouth of a Jew, it contained the plainness of the Gospel of the Lord, of whom the twelve apostles bear record; and they bear record according to the truth which is in the Lamb of God; wherefore, these things go forth from the Jews in purity, unto the Gentiles, according to the truth which is in God; and after they go forth by the hand of the twelve apostles of the Lamb from the Jews unto the Gentiles, thou seest the foundation of a great and abominable church, which is most abominable above all other churches; for behold, they have taken away from the Gospel of the Lamb, many parts which are plain and most precious; and also many covenants of the Lord have they taken away; and all this have they done, that they might pervert the right ways of the Lord; that they might blind the eyes and harden the hearts of the children of men; wherefore, thou seest that after the book had gone forth through the hands of the great and abominable church, that there are many plain and precious things taken away from the book, which is the book of the Lamb of God; and after these plain and precious things were taken away, it goeth forth unto all the nations of the Gentiles, and after it goeth forth unto all the nations of the Gentiles, yea, even across the many waters which thou hast seen with the Gentiles which

^f This is the record containing the Jewish Scripture which the colony of Lehi brought with them from Jerusalem, to which reference is made.

have gone forth out of captivity; thou seest because of the many plain and precious things which have been taken out of the book, which were plain unto the understanding of the children of men, according to the plainness that is in the Lamb of God; because of these things which are taken away out of the Gospel of the Lamb, an exceeding great many do stumble, yea, insomuch that satan hath great power over them. * * * * And it came to pass that the angel of the Lord spoke unto me, saying, behold, saith the Lamb of God, after I have visited the remnant of the house of Israel, and this remnant of whom I speak, is the seed of thy fathers;g wherefore after I have visited them in judgment, and smitten them by the hand of the Gentiles; and after the Gentiles do stumble exceedingly, because of the most plain and precious parts of the Gospel of the Lamb, which have been kept back by that abominable church, which is the mother of harlots, saith the Lamb; I will be merciful unto the Gentiles in that day, insomuch that I will bring forth unto them in mine own power much of my Gospel, which shall be plain and precious, saith the Lamb.

For behold, saith the Lamb, I will manifest Myself unto thy seed, h that they shall write many things which I shall minister unto them, which shall be plain and precious; and after thy seed shall be destroyed, and dwindle in unbelief, and also the seed of thy brethren; behold these things shall be hid up, to come forth unto the Gentiles, by the gift and power of the Lamb;

And in them shall be written my Gospel, saith the Lamb, and my rock and my salvation. * * * * And it came to pass that I beheld the remnant of the seed of my brethren, and also the book of the Lamb of God, which had proceeded forth from the mouth of a Jew, that it came forth from the Gentiles unto the remnant of the seed of my brethren, and after it had come forth unto them, I beheld other books, which came forth by the power of the Lamb, from the Gentiles unto them, unto the convincing of the Gentiles, and the remnant of the seed of my brethren, and also the Jews, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth, that the records of the prophets and of the twelve apostles of the Lamb are true. And the angel spake unto me, saying, these last records which thou hast seen among the Gentiles, shall establish the truth of the first, which are of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, and shall make known the plain and precious things which have been taken away from them; and shall make known to all kindreds, tongues, and people, that the Lamb of God is the Son of the Eternal Father, and the Savior of the world; and all men must come unto Him, or they cannot be saved; and they must come according to the words which shall be established by the mouth of the Lamb; and the words of the Lamb shall be made known in the records of thy seed, as well as in the records of the twelve apostles of the Lamb; wherefore, they both shall be

g Lehi.
h The Nephites.

established in one; for there is one God and one Shepherd over all the earth.ⁱ

The reference here made to "the book of the Lamb of God, which had proceeded forth from the mouth of a Jew," is beyond all question the Bible; while the "other books," which came forth by the power of the Lamb, from the Gentiles unto the remnant of Lehi's descendants, and which records are to establish the truth of the first records, or the Bible, is in plain allusion to the Book of Mormon and other scriptures to be brought forth by the power of God in the last days.

From all this, then, it is very evident that the purposes for which the Book of Mormon was written, counting in this summary both those reasons already enumerated and those stated in the passage last quoted, are:

First, to show unto the remnant of the house of Israel what great things the Lord has done for their fathers.

Second, to teach them the covenants of the Lord made with their fathers, that the remnant may know that they are not cast off forever.

Third, that this record may convince both Jews and Gentiles that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God, and that He manifests Himself to all nations.

Fourth, that the knowledge of a Savior might come especially to the remnant of the house of Israel on the western hemisphere, through the testimony of the Nephites and Lamanites as well as through the testimony of the Jews, that they might more fully believe the Gospel.

Fifth, that the Jews might have the testimony of the Nephites as well as that of their fathers, that Jesus is the Christ, the son of the living God.

Sixth, and I think mainly, to be a witness for the truth of the Bible, to establish its authenticity, and its credibility by bringing other witnesses to testify to the same great truths that are contained in the sacred pages of the Bible; to restore to the knowledge of mankind many plain and precious truths concerning the Gospel which men have taken out of the Jewish Scriptures, or obscured by their interpretations; by the absence of which passages, or misleading interpretations, many have stumbled and fallen into unbelief. In a word, it is the mission of the Book of Mormon to be a witness for Jesus, the Christ; for the truth of the Gospel as the power of God unto salvation; for that purpose it was written, preserved from destruction, and has now come forth to the children of men through the goodness and mercy and power of God.

LESSON FOUR

PART ONE

How Joseph Smith Obtained the Book of Mormon

Reference: "New Witness for God," Vol. II, Chap, 4.

- I Account of the Publishing of the Book of Mormon.
 - A Place.
 - B Date.
 - C Editor.
- II *Evening and Morning Star's* Account and Description of Joseph Smith.
- III Joseph's Account of Discovery.
 - A First revelation from God.
 - 1 Result of prayer.
 - B Second communication from God.
 - 1 Description of angel.
 - 2 Quoting of scripture.
 - 3 Promises to Joseph.
- IV Finding of the Plates.
 - A Place, date, etc.
 - B Appearance of the plates.
- V Joseph's Period of Preparation.
- VI Joseph Receives the Plates.
- VII History of Plates While In Joseph's Possession and His Returning Them to the Messenger.
- VIII Corroboratory Accounts by Lucy Smith, Oliver Cowdery, etc.

Suggestive Truth: Humility and perseverance are necessary to accomplish the Lord's work.

PART TWO

*Lessons Three and Four***The Melchisedek Priesthood (Continued)****Subject: The Elders Special Place.**

- I In the Order of Priesthood.
 - A First calling in the Melchisedek Priesthood.
 - B May officiate in any or all duties connected with Aaronic Priesthood.
 - C May act in place of High Priest in absence of latter.
 - D May preach and travel as a Seventy.
 - E Holds the right of presiding.
- II In the Stake.
 - A The Elders' Quorum is distinctly a Stake organization.
 - B The Elder is directly under the direction of the Stake Presidency and High Council, and is subject to their call.
 - C Holding the right of Presidency, an Elder may be called to officiate in any Stake Auxiliary Board, but not as High Councilor, Stake President, or Bishop.
- III In the Ward.
 - A Subject to the call of the Bishopric.
 - 1 This call is superceded only by one from the Stake or General Authorities.

Assignment and Questions of Practical Duties:

- a In what special appointment are you serving?
- b To whom are you directly responsible?
- c Could you hold that position if you had no priesthood? Why?
- d Name some new means that you can adopt to make your service in the position more effective.
- e Study the accompanying outline of Presidencies and see what other Presidencies besides your own you are laboring under.

Note 1: The office of elder is the first named in the quorums of the Melchisedek Priesthood. In this calling his special place is that to which his Presiding Authorities may appoint him. He may be called upon a foreign mission, or upon a special mission at home. In a Stake capacity, he acts directly under the supervision and direction of the Stake Presidency: as a member of a ward, he is subject to the call of the Bishopric. His Priesthood means service. The position affording the means of service may be in a ward organization, a Stake Board, a General Board, or in a foreign mission.

GENERAL AND SPECIAL DUTIES OF PRESIDENCIES

- I First Presidency.
 - A Special duty. See Doc. & Cov.
- II The Twelve.
 - A Special duty. See Doc. & Cov.
- III Presiding Patriarch.
 - A Special duty. See Doc. & Cov.
- IV First Council of Seventy.
 - A Special duty. See Doc. & Cov.
- V Stake Presidency.
 - A Quorum of three High Priests.
 - B Special duty.
 - 1 To set in order under the direction of the First Presidency and the Twelve, all the affairs of the Stake.
 - 2 To preside directly over the quorum or quorums of Elders.
 - 3 To preside over the High Council of the Stake.
 - 4 To preside over the Bishoprics of the Wards.
 - C General duty.
 - 1 To see that all the quorums of Priesthood and all organizations in the Stake are doing their duties. In this sense, the High Priests, Seventies, Elders and the Presidency of the Aaronic Priesthood come under the jurisdiction of the Stake Presidency.

VI Presiding Bishopric.**A** Special duties.

- 1 To keep the Lord's Storehouse.
- 2 To receive all tithes and offerings, and keep a strict account of the same.
- 3 To administer in the temporal affairs of the Church .
- 4 To preside directly over the Bishoprics of wards in all temporal things.

B General duties.

- 1 To visit the Wards and Stakes, to preach the Gospel under the direction of the Twelve, as the spirit may direct.

VII Bishops of Wards.**A** Special duty.

- 1 To attend to all the spiritual and temporal affairs in the Ward.
- 2 To organize the quorums in the Aaronic Priesthood.
- 3 To direct the labors of the visiting teachers.
- 4 To receive all tithes and offerings and to render a just account of the same to the Presiding Bishopric.
- 5 To administer to the needy, and to see that the poor are properly provided for.
- 6 To be a Judge in Israel, passing upon the High Priests, Seventies, Elders and all other members of his Ward.

B General duties.

- 1 To preside over all members of the Church in the Ward, including High Priests, Seventies, and Elders, and to assist the quorum Presidencies in getting the quorums or classes to attend to their assignments.

VIII Regular Presidencies of the Quorums.**A** President of the Twelve.

- B Presidency of High Priests' Quorum.
- C Seven Presidents of each Quorum of Seventies.
- D Presidency of Elders' Quorum.
- E President of each Priests' Quorum. (*always a Bishop*)
- F Presidency of each Teachers' Quorum.
- G Presidency of each Deacons' Quorum

Note 1: The duties of each of these presidencies are considered in detail in the respective courses of study .

NOTES, PART ONE

How Joseph Smith Obtained the Book of Mormon.

The Book of Mormon was published in the town of Palmyra, Wayne County, State of New York. It issued from the press of Mr. Egbert B. Grandin, and was published for Joseph Smith, the prophet. The exact date on which the book issued from the press cannot be ascertained. Most likely, however, it was sometime in the month of March or of April, 1830; for in the prophet's history we have him saying that "During the month of April, I went on a visit to the residence of Mr. Joseph Knight, of Coalsville, Broome County, New York." This Mr. Knight had been acquainted with the Smith family for some time. He had visited them at their home near Manchester, New York, on several occasions;^a and during the period occupied in translating the Book of Mormon, had rendered some material assistance to the prophet by supplying him and Oliver Cowdery with provisions.^b Soon after this visit the prophet informs us that he returned to Fayette, Seneca County,—evidently in the same month of April—and then adds:

"The Book of Mormon * * * * had now been published for some time, and as the ancient prophet predicted of it, 'it was accounted a strange thing'." ^c In the Evening and Morning Star for April, 1833, published at Independence, Missouri—the first periodical published by the Church—occurs the following: "Soon after the Book of Mormon came forth, containing the fulness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Church was organized, on the 6th of April, (1830)."^d This fixes approximately the date for the publication of the book. It issued from the press either very early in April or in the month of March, 1830; most likely some time in March. The first edition was five thousand copies.

^a History of Joseph Smith, the prophet, by Lucy Smith, chapters xxi, xxiii.

^b History of the Church, Vol. I, p. 47.

^c History of the Church, Vol. I, p. 84.

^d Evening and Morning Star for April, 1833, p. 167.

Naturally enough the book was "accounted a strange thing." Joseph Smith, for whom it was published, was an unlettered young man, who from the time he was ten years of age until the Book of Mormon was published—when he was twenty-four—had lived in the vicinity of Palmyra and Manchester, most of the time near the latter place. His father having met with a series of misfortunes in business ventures and land purchases, the family was in straightened circumstances through all these years, and Joseph had been under the necessity of working among the farmers in and around Manchester to aid his parents in the support of their large family. About the last thing to be expected of a young man reared under such circumstances would be that he become the publisher of a book. The fact that he had published one was of itself sufficient cause for astonishment; but it was not the fact that an unlettered youth, who had spent his life in toil among them, had published a book that was regarded as so strange a thing by the people. It was the account he gave of the book's origin, and the nature of the book itself that constituted it such a "marvel and a wonder." Joseph Smith disclaimed being its author *e* in any other sense than that he was the translator of it by miraculous means. The original Book of Mormon, the translation of which he had published, was written, or rather engraven, upon gold plates according to his representations; which plates had come into his possession in the following manner:

Early in the spring of 1820 Joseph Smith received a revelation from God in which the apostate condition of Christendom had been made known to him, coupled with a promise that at some future time the Gospel of Jesus Christ would be restored to the earth; and that he, if faithful, would be an instrument in the hands of God in accomplishing some of His great purposes in the last days.*f*

After this first revelation, Joseph Smith was left for three years without any further direct manifestation from God. At the expiration of that time however, being oppressed with a sense of loneliness, longing for further communication with the heavens, and burdened with an anxious desire to know of his standing before the Lord, on the evening of the 21st of September, 1823, after having retired for the night, he betook himself to prayer that he might receive once more a manifestation from God. The rest of the narrative is best told in his own words:

"While I was thus in the act of calling upon God, I discovered a light appearing in my room, which continued to increase until the room was lighter than at noon day, when immediately a personage

e The fact that on the title page of the first edition, Joseph Smith is called the "Author and Proprietor," is considered in Part IV of this work.

f See New Witness for God, Chapters x and xi, for a full account of this revelation. See also the Wentworth letter, Mill. Star, Vol. xix, p. 118.

appeared at my bedside, standing in the air, for his feet did not touch the floor. He had on a loose robe of most exquisite whiteness. It was a whiteness beyond anything earthly I had ever seen; nor do I believe that any earthly thing could be made to appear so exceedingly white and brilliant; his hands were naked and his arms also, a little above the wrist; so, also were his feet naked, as were his legs, a little above the ankles. His neck and head were also bare. I could discover that he had no other clothing on but this robe, as it was open, so that I could see into his bosom. Not only was his robe exceedingly white, but his whole person was glorious beyond description, and his countenance truly like lightning. The room was exceedingly light, but not so very bright as immediately around his person. When I first looked upon him I was afraid; but the fear soon left me. He called me by name, and said unto me, that he was a messenger sent from the presence of God to me, and that his name was Moroni; that God had a work for me to do; and that my name should be had for good and evil among all nations, kindreds, and tongues, or that it should be both good and evil spoken of among all people. He said there was a book deposited, written upon gold plates, giving an account of the former inhabitants of this continent, and the source from whence they sprang. He also said, that the fulness of the everlasting Gospel was contained in it, as delivered by the Savior to the ancient inhabitants (of America); also that there were two stones in silver bowls—and these stones, fastened to a breastplate, constituted what is called the Urim and Thummim—deposited with the plates; and the possession and use of these stones were what constituted seers in ancient or former times; and that God had prepared them for the purpose of translating the book.

“After telling me these things he commenced quoting the prophecies of the Old Testament. He first quoted part of the third chapter of Malachi, and he quoted also the fourth or last chapter of the same prophecy, though with a little variation from the way it reads in our Bible (the English authorized version of the Jewish Scriptures). Instead of quoting the first verse as it reads in our books he quoted it thus: “For behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly shall burn as stubble; for they that come shall burn them, saith the Lord of Hosts; that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.” And again, he quoted the fifth verse thus: ‘Behold I will reveal unto you the priesthood, by the hand of Elijah, the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.’ He also quoted the next verse differently: ‘And he shall plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers, and the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers; if it were not so, the whole earth would be utterly wasted at His coming.’

“In addition to these, he quoted the eleventh chapter of Isaiah, saying that it was about to be fulfilled.

“He quoted also the third chapter of Acts, twenty-second and twenty-third verses, precisely as they stand in our New Testament.

He said that that prophet was Christ; but the day had not yet come when 'they who would not hear His voice, should be cut off from among the people,' but soon would come.

"He quoted also the second chapter of Joel, from the twenty-eighth verse to the last. He also said that this was not yet fulfilled, but was soon to be. And he further stated, the fullness of the Gentiles was soon to come in. He quoted many other passages of scripture, and offered many explanations which cannot be mentioned here. Again, he told me that when I got the plates of which he had spoken—for the time that they should be obtained was not yet fulfilled—I should not show them to any person; neither the breastplate with the Urim and Thummim; only to those to whom I should be commanded to show them; if I did, I should be destroyed. While he was conversing with me about the plates, the vision was opened to my mind that I could see the place where the plates were deposited, and that so clearly and distinctly, that I knew the place again when I visited it.

"After this communication, I saw the light in the room begin to gather immediately around the person of him who had been speaking to me, and it continued to do so, until the room was again left dark, except just around him, when instantly I saw, as it were, a conduit open right up into heaven, and he ascended until he entirely disappeared, and the room was left as it had been before this heavenly light had made its appearance.

"I lay musing on the singularity of the scene, and marveling greatly at what had been told to me by this extraordinary messenger, when, in the midst of my meditation, I suddenly discovered that my room was again beginning to get lighted, and in an instant, as it were, the same heavenly messenger was again at my bedside. He commenced, and again related the very same things which he had done at his first visit, without the least variation; which having done he informed me of great judgments which were coming upon the earth, with great desolations by famine, sword, and pestilence; and that these grievous judgments would come on the earth in this generation. Having related these things, he again ascended as he had done before.

"By this time, so deep were the impressions made on my mind, that sleep had fled from my eyes, and I lay overwhelmed in astonishment at what I had both seen and heard; but what was my surprise when again I beheld the same messenger at my bedside, and heard him rehearse or repeat over again to me the same things as before, and added a caution to me, telling me that satan would try to tempt me, in consequence of the indigent circumstances of my father's family, to get the plates for the purpose of getting rich. This he forbade me, saying that I must have no other object in view in getting the plates but to glorify God; and must not be influenced by any other motive than that of building up His kingdom; otherwise I could not get them. After this third visit, he again ascended into heaven as before, and I was again left to ponder on the strangeness

of what I had just experienced; when almost immediately after the heavenly messenger had ascended from me the third time, the cock crowed, and I found that day was approaching, so that our interviews must have occupied the whole of the night.

"I shortly after arose from my bed, and as usual, went to the necessary labors of the day; but in attempting to work as at other times, I found my strength so exhausted as to render me entirely unable. My father, who was laboring along with me, discovered something to be wrong with me, and told me to go home. I started with the intention of going to the house; but in attempting to cross the fence out of the field where we were, my strength entirely failed me, and I fell helpless on the ground, and for a time was quite unconscious of anything. The first thing that I can recollect, was a voice speaking unto me, calling me by name. I looked up and beheld the same messenger standing over my head, surrounded by light as before. He then again related unto me all that he had related to me the previous night, and commanded me to go to my father, and tell him of the vision and commandments which I had received.

"I obeyed; I returned to my father in the field, and rehearsed the whole matter to him. He replied to me that it was of God, and told me to go and do as commanded by the messenger. I left the field and went to the place where the messenger had told me the plates were deposited; and owing to the distinctness of the vision which I had had concerning it, I knew the place the instant that I arrived there. Convenient to the village of Manchester, Ontario Co., N. Y. stands a hill of considerable size; and the most elevated of any in the neighborhood. On the west side of this hill, not far from the top, under a stone of considerable size, lay the plates, deposited in a stone box. This stone was thick and rounding in the middle on the upper side, and thinner toward the edges, so that the middle part of it was visible above ground, but the edge all round was covered with earth. Having removed the earth, I obtained a lever which I got fixed under the edge of the stone, and with a little exertion raised it up. I looked in, and there indeed did I behold the plates, the Urim and Thummim, and the breastplate as stated by the messenger. The box in which they lay, was formed by laying stones together in some kind of cement. In the bottom of the box were laid two stones cross-wise of the box, and on these stones lay the plates and the other things with them. I made an attempt to take them out, but was forbidden by the messenger, and was again informed that the time for bringing them forth had not yet arrived, neither would it, until four years from that time; but he told me that I should come to that place precisely in one year from that time and that he would there meet with me, and that I should continue to do so until the time should come for obtaining the plates.

"Accordingly, as I had been commanded, I went at the end of each year, and at each time I found the same messenger there, and received instructions and intelligence from him at each of our inter-

views, respecting what the Lord was going to do, and how and in what manner His kingdom was to be conducted in the last day. * * * * At length the time arrived for obtaining the plates, the Urim and Thummim and the breastplate. On the 22nd day of September, 1827, having gone as usual at the end of another year to the place where they were deposited, the same heavenly messenger delivered them up to me with this charge; that I should be responsible for them; that if I should let them go carelessly, or through any neglect of mine, I should be cut off; but that if I would use all my endeavors to preserve them, until he, the messenger, should call for them, they should be protected.

"I soon found out the reason why I had received such strict charge to keep them safe, and why it was that the messenger had said that when I had done what was required at my hands, he would call for them; for no sooner was it known that I had them, than the most strenuous exertions were used to get them from me; every stratagem that could be invented, was resorted to for that purpose; the persecution became more bitter and severe than before, and multitudes were on the alert continually to get them from me if possible; but by the wisdom of God they remained safe in my hands, until I had accomplished by them what was required at my hands; when, according to arrangements, the messenger called for them, (and) I delivered them up to him; and he has them in charge until this day, being the 2nd of May, 1838."

Such is Joseph Smith's account of the origin of the Book of Mormon. This is the account of its origin accepted by those who believe it to be a divine record, a volume of scripture, containing the word of God, and a history—though a brief one—of the hand dealings of God with the people of the western hemisphere. This is the account of its origin to be maintained by those who speak or write in the defense of the Book of Mormon. This is the account to be maintained as true in these pages against all that has been written against it.

It will readily be observed that the history given by Joseph Smith concerning his finding the Nephite record is very concise; that details are omitted. This is especially noticeable in regard to the efforts of his enemies to get the plates from him, he merely generalizes as to that subject; as also in the matter as to what passed between himself and the angel Moroni at his annual meetings with him between 1823 and 1827. Of these visits so interesting and instructive to Joseph Smith, he only says:

"I went at the end of each year, and at each time I found the same messenger there and received instructions and intelligence from him at each of our interviews respecting what the Lord was going to do, and how and in what manner His kingdom was to be conducted in the last days."

Doubtless, however, the instructions then received but only so

casually mentioned by the prophet, bore fruit in the progress of the work, in the things which the prophet said and did. The fact that much more happened than is stated in the narrative here quoted is evident; and not only is it evident from what the prophet himself says, but from what has been written by others who were associated with him in the work, and who must have received their information from the prophet Joseph himself. Among these is Oliver Cowdery, who was the second Elder of the Church, and the first to give the world any account in detail of these early events connected with the coming forth of the great work of God. This he did in 1834-5 in a series of nine letters to the "Saints Messenger and Advocate," published at Kirtland, Ohio, under the caption "Early Scenes and Incidents in the Church." And as these letters were published in the lifetime of the prophet, with his sanction and in a periodical published by the Church, it cannot be doubted but that the statements contained in them are reliable. In these letters Oliver Cowdery gives an account of the young prophet's first visit to Cumorah that is much more circumstantial than the description of that even by the prophet, and which Oliver Cowdery could only have learned from Joseph himself. It will be remembered that in the account already quoted from the personal history of the prophet Joseph, that he said the angel Moroni had warned him that satan would tempt him, on account of his father's indigent circumstances to obtain the plates for the purpose of getting rich; but this he must not do, nor have any other object in view than that of glorifying God; and he must be influenced by no other consideration than that of building up God's kingdom. Otherwise, he could not get possession of the plates.

The place where the Nephite record was deposited must ever be of interest to those who believe that record to be true, and therefore a description of the hill of Cumorah will not be out of place in concluding this chapter. Joseph Smith's brief description of it has already been given, and Oliver Cowdery, in his letters, already quoted, thus describes it:

"You are acquainted with the mail road from Palmyra, Wayne county, to Canadaigua, Ontario county, New York, and also as you pass from the former to the latter place, before arriving at the little town of Manchester, say from three to four, or about four miles from Palmyra, you pass a large hill on the east side of the road. Why I say large, is because it is as large perhaps as any in that country. To a person acquainted with this road a description would be unnecessary, as it is the largest and raises the highest of any on that route. The north end rises quite suddenly until it assumes a level with the more southerly extremity, and I think I may say an elevation higher than at the south a short distance, say half or three-fourths of a mile. As you pass towards Canadaigua it lessens gradually until the surface assumes its common level, or is broken by other small hills or ridges, water courses and ravines. I think I am justified in saying that this is the highest hill for some distance

around, and I am certain that its appearance, as it rises so suddenly from a plain on the north, must attract the notice of the traveller as he passes by."

LESSON FIVE

PART ONE

Subject: Translation of Record

References: "New Witness for God," Vol. II, Chap. 5.
M. I. A. Manual, No. 7.

- I Joseph prepares to carry on the work of translation.
 - A Rumors afloat.
 - B Joseph moves to Harmony.
 - C Searched by officers.
 - D Martin Harris submits samples of the characters to Professor Anthon. The Professor's actions.
- II Professor Anthon's letter of 1834 .
- III Professor Anthon's letter of 1841.
 - A Discrepancy between these letters.
- IV Work of Translation. Martin Harris as Amanuensis.
 - A Martin's desire to show part of the translation to friends.
 - B The manuscript is lost.
 - C The effect of this loss.
- V Martin's desire for a witness to the truth of Joseph's claims.

Suggestive Truth: The Lord's work may be assailed but cannot be overthrown by man

PART TWO

Subject: Organization of Elders' Quorum

- I Definition of Quorum.
- II Authority to Organize.
 - A Who holds.
 - B From where derived.
 - C How exercised.
 - 1 Through Ward authorities.
 - a By ascertaining standing and efficiency of proposed members.
- III Composition of Quorum.
 - A Number.
 - 1 Authority for number.
 - a See Doc. & Cov, 107: 89.
 - B Members.
 - 1 Qualifications.
 - a Name these specifically.
- IV Officers.
 - A Offices to be filled.
 - B Selection.
 - 1 By whom.
 - 2 Manner.
 - a Designated and called by Stake Presidency.
 - b Approved by High Council.
 - c Sustained by members.
 - C Installation.

Assignment: To have Quorum complete in all respects. A quorum cannot be organized with fewer than a majority.

NOTES, PART ONE

The Translation of the Record. Martin Harris as Amanuensis

Following the account of how Joseph Smith obtained the Book of Mormon it should be known how he translated it, and what difficulties attended that work. I would remind the reader in passing that I am to deal with a remarkable narrative, one in which strange things occur, and one in which many who deny or doubt the power of God will be inclined to have little faith. To such I would say, judge nothing hastily, dismiss nothing petulantly, patient investigation, and sometimes suspension of judgment in relation to matters difficult of belief are necessary to the ascertainment of truth, and so wise men, anxious to know the truth, proceed.

The prophet, in his narrative quoted in the preceding chapter, tells us that he soon found out the reason why he had received such a strict injunction to guard carefully the Nephite record and the Urim and Thummim; and why it was that Moroni had said that after he (Joseph) had done what was required at his hands he (Moroni) would call for them. "For no sooner was it known," says Joseph, "that I had them, (the Nephite Plates) than the most strenuous exertions were used to get them from me; every stratagem that could be invented was resorted to for that purpose; the persecution became more bitter and severe than before, and multitudes were on the alert continually to get them from me if possible."^a

Rumor with her thousand tongues, he informs us, was all the time employed circulating tales about his father's family, and about himself; and doubtless much of that misrepresentation which followed the prophet and his father's family throughout his life had its origin about this time.

So intolerable at last became the persecution about Manchester that Joseph decided to move with his wife to the home of her parents in Harmony, Susquehannah County, Pennsylvania. Susquehannah County is one of the northern counties of Pennsylvania, and joins Broome County in the State of New York; and Harmony is a distance of from one hundred to one hundred and fifty miles from Manchester, New York. The young prophet was in very straightened circumstances when he resolved upon removing to Pennsylvania; but about that time a Mr. Martin Harris, a respectable and well-to-do farmer of Palmyra, New York, called upon the Smith family and gave Joseph fifty dollars to enable him to make the proposed journey. A team and wagon was fitted out and in company with his wife the prophet started for Pennsylvania. Enroute he was twice stopped by officers of the law, who, under the power of a search warrant, ransacked his wagon in search of the plates, but in

^a History of the Church, Vol. I, p. 18

each case they were disappointed, as they did not find them though the prophet had them concealed among his effects.

Arriving in Pennsylvania in the month of December, the prophet began an examination of the characters engraven upon the plates and copied a considerable number of them; and some of them he translated by means of the Urim and Thummim. In this desultory work he spent the time until the month of February, 1828, when Martin Harris, the gentleman who had befriended him on the eve of his departure from Manchester, arrived at his home in Harmony. This man had become interested in the prophet and his work, and believed him to be in possession of the plates.

Some of the characters which Joseph had copied from the plates, Martin Harris determined to submit to Professor Charles Anthon, "a gentleman of the highest reputation, both in America and Europe, and well known for his valuable and correct edition of the classics"^b For this purpose Harris made the journey from Harmony, Pennsylvania, to the city of New York. Some of the Nephite characters given into the custody of Mr. Harris were translated while others were not.

Martin Harris says:

"I went to the city of New York, and presented the characters which had been translated, with the translation thereof, to Professor Charles Anthon, a gentleman celebrated for his literary attainments. Professor Anthon stated that the translation was correct, more so than any he had before seen translated from the Egyptian. I then showed him those which were not yet translated, and he said that they were Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyriac, and Arabic, and he said that they were the true characters. He gave me a certificate, certifying to the people of Palmyra that they were true characters, and that the translation of such of them as had been translated was also correct. I took the certificate and put it into my pocket, and was just leaving the house, when Mr. Anthon called me back, and asked me how the young man found out that there were gold plates in the place where he found them. I answered that an angel of God had revealed it unto him.

"He then said to me, 'Let me see that certificate.' I accordingly took it out of my pocket and gave it to him, when he took it and tore it to pieces, saying that there was no such thing now as ministering of angels, and that if I would bring the plates to him, he would translate them. I informed him that part of the plates were sealed, and that I was forbidden to bring them. He replied, 'I cannot read a sealed book.' I left him and went to Dr. Mitchell, who sanctioned what Professor Anthon had said respecting both the characters and the translation."

^b Isaiah; xxix, 11, 12.

The statements of Professor Anthon and Martin Harris are very contradictory, but the sequence will show that there is much that supports the statement of Martin Harris in the main as true; while the anxiety of the Professor to disconnect himself as far as possible from any association with "these wretched fanatics", will account for his version of the incident. The object of Mr. Harris in presenting these transcribed characters to the learned professor was, undoubtedly, to learn if they were true characters, or only the idle invention of Joseph Smith. That the answer of professor Anthon and Dr. Mitchell was in favor of their being true characters is evidenced by the fact that Martin Harris returned immediately to Joseph Smith, in Harmony, made his report, and thence went to Palmyra in New York, to arrange his business affairs that he might hasten back to Pennsylvania to become the amanuensis of the young prophet in the work of translation. This Martin Harris would not likely have done if Professor Anthon's answer had been what that gentleman represents it to have been in his letters to Mr. Howe and Rev. Coit; nor would Martin Harris have ventured, subsequently, to have furnished the money to pay for the publication of the first edition of the book, had he been assured by the Professor that the whole thing was a "hoax" or a "scheme" to cheat him out of his money.

As stated above, Martin Harris returned to Palmyra after this interview with Professor Anthon, arranged his affairs, and joined the prophet in harmony about the 12th of April, 1828, when he commenced writing as Joseph translated. This work he continued until the 14th of June following—two months, by which time they had translated enough to make one hundred and sixteen pages of manuscript, of large sheets—usually called fool's cap paper.

Soon after Mr Harris commenced to write for the prophet, he began to importune him for the privilege of showing so much of the translation as they had made to a number of his friends. This request the prophet refused to grant. Nothing daunted by this refusal Harris asked the prophet to inquire of the Lord through the Urim and Thummim if he might not have that privilege. This the prophet did and Harris' request was denied. He importuned him to ask again, with the like result, and yet again did he implore that the prophet would ask the Lord for his permission. "After much solicitation," says the prophet, in his account of this affair, "I again inquired of the Lord, and permission was granted him to have the writings on certain conditions, which were, that he should show them only to his brother, Preserved Harris, his wife, his father and mother, and Mrs. Cobb, a sister of his wife. In accordance with this last answer, I required of him that he should bind himself in a covenant to me in the most solemn manner, that he would not do otherwise than had been directed. He did so. He bound himself as I required of him, took the writings, and went his way;"^c and the prophet took

^c History of the Church, Vol. I, p 21, 22.

advantage of the absence of Harris, who had acted as his scribe, to visit his parents at Manchester.

The solemn engagement which Martin Harris made with the prophet he broke. He showed the writings to other persons than those named in his agreement with the prophet, and these stole the precious manuscript from him, and he was never able to recover it. This circumstance also went hard with the prophet Joseph as to his standing with the Lord. He had allowed himself to be over persuaded by the importunities of Martin Harris, and after he had twice learned that it was not the will of the Lord that Harris should have the manuscript. He learned that Harris had lost the one hundred and sixteen pages of manuscript while he was yet in Manchester visiting with his parents; and immediately returned to Harmony, where he humbled himself in prayer before God that he might obtain forgiveness for his error; but apparently to no immediate purpose, for Moroni appeared to him and demanded the plates and also the Urim and Thummim. These were surrendered, with what anguish of soul one may readily understand. Exactly what length of time they were withheld from him cannot be determined, but evidently not long; for in July of the same year the angel guardian of the record, Moroni, appeared to him again and presented the plates and Urim and Thummim to him.

The prophet informs us that after receiving this revelation the Urim and Thummim and also the plates were taken from him, but in a few days they were returned to him, whereupon he again inquired of the Lord and received a very important revelation.^d

Encouraged to be moderate in his exertions at translating by the admonition in the foregoing revelation, not to run faster, nor labor more than he had strength and means provided to enable him to proceed, the prophet did not immediately attempt to resume the work of translation, but worked upon a small farm which he had purchased from his wife's father.

As this episode of losing the one hundred and sixteen pages of manuscript, together with the loss for a season of the gift to translate, and being required to surrender all the sacred things which had been entrusted to his keeping, was unquestionably a cause of deep sorrow to the young prophet, so the restoration of the plates and Urim and Thummim to him must have been a joy unspeakable. How Martin Harris felt—what anguish of heart—what sense of chagrin, or how deeply he repented his folly is not recorded; but as he was not a man of keen sensibilities, it may be that his sufferings were not intense. At any rate we next hear of him in March, 1829, and he is still clamoring for a witness from the Lord that Joseph Smith had the plates, of which the prophet had testified. The prophet inquired of the Lord and obtained a revelation of which the following is the part that has reference to Martin Harris' request:

^d D. & C., Sec. X.

“Behold, I say unto you, that as my servant Martin Harris has desired a witness at my hands, that you my servant, Joseph Smith, Jun., have got the plates of which you have testified and borne record that you have received of me; and now behold this shall you say unto him, He who spake unto you, said unto you, I, the Lord, am God, and have given these things unto you, my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and have commanded you that you should stand as a witness of these things; and I have caused you, that you should enter into a covenant with me, that you should not show them except to those persons to whom I have commanded you, and you have no power over them except I grant it unto you. * * * * *

Behold I say unto you, I have reserved those things which I have entrusted unto you, my servant Joseph, for a wise purpose in me, and it shall be made known unto future generations; but this generation shall have my word through you, and in addition to your testimony, the testimony of three of my servants, whom I shall call and ordain, unto whom I will show these things; and they shall go forth with my words that are given through you; they shall know of a surety that these things are true, for from heaven will I declare it unto them. I will give them power that they may behold and view these things as they are, and to none else will I grant this power to receive this same testimony among this generation, in this the beginning of the rising up and the coming forth of my church out of the wilderness. * * * * *

And the testimony of three witnesses will I send forth of my word; and, behold, whosoever believeth on my words, them will I visit with the manifestations of my spirit, and they shall be born of me, even of water and of the spirit. * * *

* * * And their testimony shall go forth unto the condemnation of this generation, if they harden their hearts against them; for a desolating scourge shall go forth among the inhabitants of the earth, and shall continue to be poured out, from time to time, if they repent not, until the earth is empty and the inhabitants thereof consumed away, and utterly destroyed by the brightness of my coming. Behold I tell you these things, even as I also told the people of the destruction of Jerusalem, and my word shall be verified at this time, as it hath hitherto been verified. * * * * *

* * * * * And now, again I speak unto you my servant Joseph, concerning the man that desires the witness. Behold I say unto him, he exalts himself, and does not humble himself sufficiently before me; but if he will blow down before me, and humble himself in mighty prayer and faith, in the sincerity of his heart, then will I grant unto him a view of the things which he desires to see; and then he shall say unto the people of this generation, Behold, I have seen the things which the Lord has shown unto Joseph Smith, Jun., and I know of a surety that they are true, for I have seen them, for they have been shown unto me by the power of God and not of man. And I, the Lord, command him, my servant, Martin Harris, that he shall say no more unto them concerning these things, except he shall say, I have seen them, and they have been shown unto me by the power of God; and these are the words which he shall say. But if

he deny this he will break the covenant which he has before covenanted with me, and, behold, he is condemned. And now except he humble himself, and acknowledge unto me the things that he has done which are wrong,^e and covenant with me that he will keep my commandments, and exercise faith in me, behold, I say unto him, he shall have no such views, for I will grant unto him no views of the things of which I have spoken, and if this be the case I command you, my servant Joseph, that you shall say unto him, that he shall do no more, nor trouble me any more concerning this matter. And if this be the case, behold I say unto thee, Joseph, when thou hast translated a few more pages ^f thou shalt stop for a season even until I command thee again: then thou mayest translate again; and except thou do this, behold, thou shalt have no more gift, and I will take away the things which I have entrusted with thee. And now, because I foresee the lying in wait to destroy thee; yea; I foresee that if my servant Martin Harris humble not himself and receive a witness at my hand, that he will fall into transgression; and there are many that lie in wait to destroy thee from off the face of the earth; and for this cause, that thy days may be prolonged, I have given unto thee these commandments; yea, for this cause I have said, stop and stand still until I command thee, and I will provide means whereby thou mayest accomplish the thing which I have commanded thee; and if thou art faithful in keeping my commandments, thou shalt be lifted up at the last day. Amen.”^g

It will be observed here that the language of this revelation takes on a sternness of tone and an independence in respect to Martin Harris and his future connection with the work that is suitable to the past conduct of that vacillating man; and in effect gives him sharply to understand that there must be repentance deep and sincere, and humiliation before God, or he may go his way and have no further lot or part in the great work of God.

^e Doubtless an allusion to his breaking the covenant with Joseph respecting the manuscript which was lost.

^f Most likely Emma his wife wrote for him during these days when he was evidently translating occasionally.

^g₄History of the Church, Vol. I, p. 28; also Doc. & Cov., Sec. V.

LESSON SIX

PART ONE

Translation of the Record

References: "New Witness for God, Vol. II, Chap. 6. or"
M. I. A. Manual No. 7.

- I Oliver Cowdery Amanuensis
 - A Joseph becomes acquainted with Cowdery.
 - B Revelation concerning Oliver Cowdery and his duties.
 - C Subject matter of revelations received by Joseph.
 - D Oliver Cowdery sees John the Baptist and is ordained to the Priesthood.
 - E Timely assistance of Mr Joseph Knight.
- II Joseph and Oliver move to Fayette.
 - A Miracles performed to assist David Whitmer.
 - B The meeting of the stranger on the road.
 - C Mrs. Whitmer's experience.

Suggestive Truth: The shortcomings of one man cannot prevent the Lord's will from being carried out, for another will be raised up to take his place.

PART TWO

Subject: The President

- I His Qualifications.
 - A A man of personal magnetism.
 - B A man of influence in the community.
 - C A knowledge of the principles of the Gospel.
 - D A man who lives the principles of the Gospel.

II His Duties.

A To preside over Meetings.

1 Punctuality.

a What suggestions can be made to secure punctuality?

2 Preparation.

3 Despatch in business.

a Advantages in conforming to parliamentary rules.

b Observance of order of business.

B To watch over members of the Quorum.

1 Visits to the homes of the Quorum members.

2 Advantages of close association and acquaintance with members.

a To what extent is the President entitled to investigate the lives of members.

Assignment: The president will cultivate a close personal acquaintance with every member.

How can members assist the President in cultivating this mutual acquaintance? Specify.

NOTES, PART ONE

Translation of the Record (Con.), Oliver Cowdery, Amanuensis

On the fifth day of April,^h as if in fulfillment of the promise made to Joseph Smith in the revelation concerning Martin Harris, just quoted, namely, that the Lord would provide means whereby the prophet might accomplish the thing which the Lord had commanded him to do—Oliver Cowdery came to the young prophets, house, at Harmony, Pennsylvania. This was the first meeting of these two men. Oliver Cowdery, a native of Vermont, and now twenty-four years of age, had moved into the state of New York

^h This date in the prophet's history, published in the Mill. Star (Supplement), Vol. xiv., p. 12, is set down as the 15th of April, and the day Oliver began writing as Joseph translated is said to be the 17th of April. The 15th and 17th, however, are typographical errors. In the original manuscript of the History of the Church in the Historian's Office, the dates are written the 5th and 7th; see also "Times and Seasons," Vol. I., p. 201, where Oliver Cowdery gives the dates 5th and 7th of April, 1829.

about four years previous to this, and for a time had been employed as a clerk in a store. In the winter of 1828-9 he left the store and taught the district school in the town of Manchester, which was only some nine miles from his father's home. At Manchester he became acquainted with the Smith family, Joseph Smith Sen., being a patron of the school he taught. According to the American custom of those days, the school teacher "boarded round" in turn with the families of the neighborhood. This brought Oliver Cowdery into immediate contact with the Smith family, and while he was boarding at their home the parents of the prophet related to him the circumstances of their son obtaining the Nephite record.

Young Cowdery became intensely interested in the story related to him. Meantime he met David Whitmer in Palmyra, a young man about his own age, who lived with his father's family some twenty-five miles from Palmyra, near the town of Waterloo, in a neighborhood called Fayette, Seneca County, at the north end of Seneca Lake. In his conversation with young Whitmer, Oliver told him of his acquaintance with the Smith family and expressed himself to the effect that there must be something in the story of finding the plates, and he announced his intention to investigate the matter.ⁱ Later when Oliver started for Harmony, where the prophet was living, he passed the Whitmer home at Fayette, and promised David that he would report his findings to him concerning Joseph having the plates.

Oliver became convinced that Joseph's story was true, and being informed by the prophet that it was the will of God that he should remain and act as his scribe in the work of translation, he did so, and on the 7th of April (1829) commenced to write as the prophet dictated the translation obtained by means of the Urim and Thummim.

Oliver in a few days became anxious to learn more largely the will of the Lord concerning himself and his connection with the work then coming forth, and the prophet through the Urim and Thummim obtained a revelation for him in which occur the following passages:

"A great and marvelous work is about to come forth unto the children of men. Behold, I am God, and give heed unto my word, which is quick and powerful. * * * Behold the field is white already to harvest; wherefor, whoso desireth to reap, let him thrust in his sickle with his might, and reap while the day last, that he may treasure up for his soul everlasting salvation in the kingdom of God. * * * Now as you have asked, behold I say unto you keep my commandments, and seek to bring forth and establish the cause of my Zion; seek not for riches, but for wisdom; and behold the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto you, and then shall you be rich. Behold, he that hath eternal life is rich. * * *"

ⁱ Statement of David Whitmer in Kansas City Journal, June 5th, 1881.

Verily, verily I say unto thee, blessed art thou for what thou hast done, for thou hast inquired of me; and behold, as often as thou hast inquired thou hast received instruction of my spirit. If it had not been so, thou wouldst not have come to this place where thou art at this time. Behold, thou knowest thou hast inquired of me, and I did enlighten thy mind; and now I tell thee these things, that thou mayest know that thou hast been enlightened by the spirit of truth; yea, I tell thee that thou mayest know that there is none else, save God, that knoweth thy thoughts and the intents of thy heart; I tell thee these things as a witness unto thee, that the words of the work which thou hast been writing are true. Therefore be diligent; stand by my servant Joseph faithfully, in whatsoever difficult circumstances he may be for the word's sake. Admonish him in his faults, and also receive admonition of him. Be patient, be sober, be temperate; have patience, faith, hope, and charity. Behold, thou art Oliver, and I have spoken unto thee because of thy desires; therefore treasure up these words in thy heart; be faithful and diligent in keeping the commandments of God, and I will encircle thee in the arms of my love.

“* * * * * Verily, verily, I say unto you, if you desire a further witness, cast your mind upon the night when you cried unto me in your heart that you might know concerning the truth of these things; did I not speak peace to your mind concerning the matter? What greater witness can you have than from God? And now, behold, you have received a witness, for I have told thee things which no man knoweth, have ye not received a witness?”^j

These revelations, it should be observed, contain sharp reproofs for the transgressor. They do not flatter Joseph Smith any more than they do Martin Harris, though Joseph is the one through whom they were given. Each is reproved, and evidently without respect to person. They represent the Lord as holding out no promise either to the prophet or his associates of immunity from difficulty, from trial. They are redolent rather of warning. The prophet is plainly told of the many that were lying in wait to destroy him. Deep humility and repentance is required when a wrong is committed; and if that is not forthcoming, then behold the self-willed,

^j Doc. & Cov., Sec. vi.

The reader may think I am quoting very copiously from these revelations given while the translation of the Book of Mormon was in progress; and he may think these incidents have little or nothing to do with the story of the translation, and the story of the translation itself has but little to do with the object of this work. I would suggest, however, that this history of the translation is necessary to future arguments to be made when I come to the consideration of the objections to the Book of Mormon in part IV., where I shall examine under theories for the origin of the Book of Mormon. Besides I want the reader to know the atmosphere in which this work of translation was done; and for that purpose call especial attention to the spirit of the several revelations that have been quoted.

the proud, are told to go their way, and trouble the Lord no further concerning their future connection with this work.

Look in passing, at this revelation to Oliver Cowdery. There is no flattering promise of a worldly character in it. A great and marvelous work is about to come forth; thrust in your sickle and reap; keep my commandments, is almost sternly said; seek to bring forth and establish the cause of Zion; seek not for riches, but for wisdom; be diligent; stand by my servant Joseph in whatsoever difficult circumstances he may be for the word's sake. Then there is to be difficult circumstances? "Admonish him in his faults." What, the prophet! Yes, the prophet, he is not to be above admonition. What humility in the prophet is here! This smacks of the spirit of Christ. Receive admonition of him. Be patient. Be sober. Be temperate. Have patience, faith, hope, and charity. This is admirable. False prophets have no such basic principles as these. They build not with such stones. And Oliver's reward? Not riches of this world. Not greatness in the eyes of men. Not the honors and applause of the world. "If thou wilt do good, yea and hold out faithful to the end, thou shalt be saved in the kingdom of God." That is to be his reward. There is nothing worldly in all this. This spirit is worthy the great work these young men are, under God, bringing forth. This is the kind of atmosphere one would expect to find surrounding men engaged in such a work. But it is time to return to the narrative.

When Oliver found that the secret meditations of his heart were thus revealed through Joseph Smith; when his secret prayers were revealed and the answer of God's spirit to those prayers made known, he could no longer doubt that his new found friend was a prophet or God. It must have been with renewed zeal that he took up again his work as a scribe. It was of these days that he afterwards wrote:

"These were days never to be forgotten—to sit under the sound of a voice dictated by the inspiration of heaven, awakened the utmost gratitude of this bosom. Day after day I continued, uninterrupted, to write from his mouth, as he translated with the Urim and Thummim, or, as the Nephites would have said, 'Interpreters,' the history or record called the Book of Mormon."^k

Soon after this, namely on the 15th day of May, 1829, Oliver Cowdery himself became a witness to the ministration of an angel, for it was upon that date that John the Baptist appeared to himself and Joseph Smith while they were engaged in prayer in the woods, near Harmony, ordained them to the Aaronic priesthood and instructed them upon the subject of baptism, a full account of which is given in the writer's "New Witness for God."^l Subsequently he with Joseph received another administration of angels some time in

^k Times and Seasons, Vol. II. p. 201.

^l Vol. I. p.p 186-7.

the month of June following, when Peter, James and John conferred upon them the Melchisedek priesthood, on the banks of the Susquehanna River, a full account of which is also given in the "New Witness for God."^m

Meantime Oliver was writing his friend David Whitmer his findings as to the truth of the prophet Joseph having the plates. He wrote soon after his arrival in Harmony that he was convinced that Joseph Smith had the records. Shortly after this, doubtless immediately after Joseph received the revelation in which the secret meditations and prayers of Oliver respecting the work before he saw the prophet were made known, he wrote a second letter to David, in which he inclosed a few lines of what had been translated and assured him that he knew of a surety that Joseph Smith had a record of a people that inhabited this continent in ancient times; and that the plates they were translating gave a history of these people; he moreover assured David that he had "revealed knowledge" concerning the truth of what he affirmed. These letters young Whitmer showed to his parents, and to his brothers and sisters.

Mr. Joseph Knight, Sen., of Colesville, Broome County, New York, several times brought the young men provisions—food—which enabled them to continue the work of translation without interruption. But for this timely assistance the work of translation must have been relinquished from time to time in order to secure supplies. Mr. Knight knew the Smith family and had called upon them a number of times at their home in Manchester. He evidently had considerable faith in the claims of Joseph concerning the Book of Mormon; for on the occasion of his visit to him in May, 1829, he desired to know what his duty was with reference to the work that the Lord was about to bring forth. The prophet inquired of the Lord, and, as in the case of Oliver Cowdery, after declaring that a great and marvelous work was about to come forth, the revelation said:

"Keep my commandments, and seek to bring forth and establish the cause of Zion. Behold, I speak unto you, and also to all those who have desires to bring forth and establish this work, and no one can assist in this work, except he shall be humble and full of love, having faith, hope, and charity, being temperate in all things whatsoever shall be entrusted to his care."ⁿ

For a time the prophet had been permitted to pursue the work of translation at Harmony without interference. But now there began to be mutterings of an approaching storm of persecution. Threats were frequent, and the young men were only preserved from actual violence by the blessing of the Lord and the influence of Mr. Isaac Hale, father of the prophet's wife; who, though he had no faith

^m Vol. I, p. 187.

ⁿ History of the Church, Vol. I, p. 47

in the prophet's work, and in the past had manifested some hostility towards him, he still believed in law and order; was opposed to mob violence; and was willing that Joseph and his associates should be permitted to complete their work without interference.^o

On account of the manifestation of this unfriendly spirit in the community, however, Joseph and Oliver kept secret for a time the circumstance of their ordination to the priesthood and their baptism. They could not, however, long continue silent on such a subject, and in a few days, under a sense of duty, they commenced to reason out of the scriptures with their friends and acquaintances concerning the work of God. But Joseph was evidently uneasy concerning their safety at Harmony, and under his direction Oliver wrote to David Whitmer at Fayette, asking him to come down to Harmony and take them to the elder Whitmer's home, giving as a reason for their rather strange request that they had received a commandment from God to that effect. This request found David Whitmer in the midst of his spring work. He had some twenty acres of land to plow and concluded to do that and then go. "I got up one morning to go to work as usual," he says, "and on going to the field, found between five and seven acres of my land had been plowed under during the night. I don't know who did it; but it was done just as I would have done it myself, and the plow was left standing in the furrow. This enabled me to start sooner." Nor was this the only assistance of like character given to him. While harrowing in a field of wheat before starting on his journey he found to his surprise that he had accomplished more in a few hours than was usual to do in two or three days. The day following this circumstance he went out to spread plaster over a field according to the custom of the farmers in that locality, when, to his surprise, he found the work had been done, and well done. David Whitmer's sister who lived near the field told him that three strangers had appeared in the field the day before and spread the plaster with remarkable skill. She at the time presumed that they were men whom David had hired to do the work.

This assistance provided through some divine agency—it can be accounted for in no other way, enabled David Whitmer to respond sooner than he otherwise could have done to the call to go and bring the prophet and his associate from Harmony, where mob violence was impending, to the home of his father, Peter Whitmer, where the work of translation could be finished in peace and security.

When David Whitmer was approaching the little village of Harmony with his two horse team and wagon, he was met some distance from the town by the prophet and Oliver. "Oliver told me," says David Whitmer in relating the circumstance, "that Joseph had informed him when I started from home, where I had stopped the first night, how I read the sign at the tavern; where I stopped the next night, etc.; and that I would be there that day before dinner,

^o History of the Church, Vol. I, p. 44.

and this was why they had come out to meet me; all of which was exactly as Joseph had told Oliver, at which I was greatly astonished."

The day following David Whitmer's arrival at Harmony the plates were packed up and delivered into the care of the Angel Moroni, that they might be safely conveyed to Fayette. "When I was returning to Fayette," says David Whitmer, "with Joseph and Oliver, all of us riding in the wagon, Oliver and I on an old fashion, wooden spring seat, and Joseph behind us, when traveling along in a clear open place, a very pleasant, nice looking old man suddenly appeared by the side of our wagon and saluted us with, 'Good morning, it is very warm, at the same time wiping his face or forehead with his hand. We returned the salutation, and by a sign from Joseph, I invited him to ride if he was going our way. But he said very pleasantly, 'No, I am going to Cumorah.' This name was somewhat new to me, and I did not know what 'Cumorah' meant. We all gazed at him and at each other, and as I looked round inquiringly of Joseph, the old man instantly disappeared, so that I did not see him again."

Replying to the question, "Did you notice his appearance?" David Whitmer replied: "I should think I did. He was, I should think, about five feet eight or nine inches tall and heavy set, about such a man as James Cleve there (a gentleman present at the Whitmer, Pratt and Smith interview), but heavier. His face was as large; he was dressed in a suit of brown woolen clothes, his hair and beard were white, like brother Pratt's, but his beard was not so heavy. I also remember that he had on his back a sort of knapsack with something in it shaped like a book. It was the messenger who had the plates, who had taken them from Joseph just prior to our starting from Harmony."

Soon after the arrival at the Whitmer residence in the garden near by, Moroni once more delivered the sacred record to Joseph, and the work of translation was renewed with even greater vigor than at Harmony; for when Oliver would tire of writing, one of the Whitmers or Emma Smith would relieve him.

David Whitmer says that soon after the installment of Joseph, his wife, and Oliver Cowdery in the Whitmer household, he saw something which led him to believe that the plates were concealed in his father's barn and frankly asked the prophet if it were so. Joseph frankly replied that it was. "Some time after this," David adds: "My mother was going to milk the cows, when she was met out near the yard by the same old man (meaning the one who had saluted his party on the way from Harmony, at least David judged him to be the same, doubtless from his mother's description of him,) who said to her: 'You have been very faithful and diligent in your labors, but you are tired because of the increase of your toil; it is proper therefore, that you should receive a witness that your faith may be strengthened.' Thereupon he showed her the plates. My father and mother had a large family of their own, the addition to it,

therefore, of Joseph, his wife Emma, and Oliver, very greatly increased the toil and anxiety of my mother. And although she had never complained she had sometimes felt that her labor was too much, or at least she was perhaps beginning to feel so. This circumstance, however, completely removed all such feelings, and nerved her up for her increased responsibilities."p

p Pratt and Smith Report. Mill. Star, Vol. XL, 772.

LESSON SEVEN

PART ONE

Subject: Translation (Continued)

References: "New Witness for God," Vol. II, Chap. 7.
M. I. A. Manual No. 7. D. & C. 8—9.

I Manner of Translation.

- A Joseph's account of the translation.
- B Oliver Cowdery's account.
- C David Whitmer's account.
- D Description of "Urim and Thummim," and the "Seer Stone".
- E Martin's test of the "Seer Stone."

II Necessary Qualifications to Translate.

- A Faith, prayer, and humbleness.
- B Revelations to Oliver and Joseph.
- C Language used in translation.

Suggestive Truth: The prophet of the Lord retains his individuality while in his service, and does not become a mere machine.

PART TWO

Subject: The Counselors

I Selection.

- A By President with approval of Stake Presidency.

II Qualifications.

- A Men agreeable to President.
- B Men of industry and good example.
- C Men who have or will acquire a good knowledge of the Gospel.

III Duties.

- A To meet and counsel with the President at least once each week.
 - 1 To have constantly the welfare of Quorum at heart, and to make suggestions for its advancement.
- B To bear a definite portion of responsibility.
 - 1 Visiting members.
 - 2 Looking after class work.
 - 3 Looking after secretary and minutes.
 - 4 Looking after funds.
 - 5 Attendance at Stake meetings.

Assignment: The President and Counselors will divide their labors. The following is suggested:

- A In visiting members let each of the Presidency be assigned a district or ward.
- B Let one have charge of class work within the Quorum.
- C Let one have charge of the secretaries and records of the Quorum.

LESSON EIGHT

PART ONE

Subject: Translation (Continued)

References: "New Witness for God," Vol. II, Chap. 8, History of Church, Vol. II, pp. 48, 49, History of Joseph Smith, Chap. 31, and M. I. A. Manual No. 7.

I The Printing of the Record.

A Contract is let.

B Instructions left by Joseph for Oliver Cowdery.

II Some Curious Facts.

A Letter to J. N. Tucker.

B Original manuscript deposited.

C Finding of relics.

Suggestive Truth: Though Heaven's care was over the plates it was necessary for the Lord's servants to exercise due caution.

PART TWO

Subject: The Secretary**I His Qualifications.**

A A man who loves the work and the Quorum.

B One capable of making neat and accurate records.

II His Duties.

A To keep the roll.

1 To advise President of delinquencies.

2 To keep record of new members and of those leaving wards.

3 Certificates of ordination and membership.

B To make the record.

- 1 To what extent should minutes contain substance of discussion?
a His participation in class work.
- 2 How can reading of minutes be made more interesting?
- 3 The advisability of reading at same meeting.
- 4 How and where official record should be preserved.

Assignment:

- A Official duties.
- B Personal Duties.
- C The secretary will prepare and present to the President a list of delinquent members, and will henceforth participate freely in the discussion of the class work.

LESSON NINE

PART ONE

Analysis of the Book of Mormon

References: "New Witness for God," Vol. II, Chap. 9, Books of Nephi, Jacob, Enos, Jarom, Omni, Amaron, Chemists, Abinadom, Amaleki, Writings of Moroni and Mormon, and M. I. A. Manual No. 7.

I The Small Plates.

A Writers in this division.

II Mormon's Abridgments of the Large Plates.

A What this contains.

B Style of abridgment.

1 Examples.

C Mormon's comments.

III Writings of Moroni.

- A Finishes Mormon's record.
- B Book of Moroni.

IV Summary of the Three Divisions.

- A Total number of writers, with pages in each division
- B The four principal writers with their portion of writing.

Suggestive Truth: Each writer of the Book of Mormon had his own style, which however, may be lost in the translation by Joseph Smith.

PART TWO**Subject: The Class Leader****I** His Qualifications.

- A A teacher of men.
 - 1 What are the elements of good teaching?

II Preparation.

- A The outline to be thoroughly digested.
 - 1 To what extent should the outline be used in the class?
- B References and supplemental reading.
- C Aim and arrangement definite.
 - 1 Advantages of preparing supplemental outline of class leader's own thoughts and ideas.

III Conduct of Class.

- A Advisability of general and topical assignments.
 - 1 Which method will receive best preparation?
- B How can long talks be avoided?
- C How to secure general response.
- D Advantage of always standing before class.

Assignment: The class leader will study the best methods to be used in the quorum, and apply them. He will study how best to encourage the Elders to devote time to home study.

LESSON TEN

PART ONE

Migrations to Western Continent

References: "New Witness for God," Vol. II, Chap. 10,
or M. I. A. Manual No. 7.

- I Colony of Jared.
 - A Circumstances attending their departure.
 - B Arrived in western continent.
 - C Outline of their history.

- II Lehi's Colony.
 - A Circumstances attending departure.
 - B Arrival on western continent.
 - C Manuscripts etc. brought with them.
 - D Division of the family.
 - E Higeras of righteous Nephites.

- III Mulek's Colony.
 - A Bible account of description of Babylon.
 - B Mulek lands on western continent.
 - C Coriantum visits colony of Mulek.
 - D Meeting of Mulekites and Nephites.

Suggestive Truth: The Lord is able to fulfill the promises made to his people.

PART TWO

Privileges and Duties of the Elder

- I As Standing Ministers to the Church.
- II Difference Between "Standing" and "Traveling" Ministers.
 - A Compare with that of "priest."
 - B What is meant by "standing minister to the Church"
 - 1 To confirm.

- 2 To confer the Holy Ghost.
- 3 To ordain Elders, Priests, Teachers and Deacons
- 4 To officiate in any duty of office in the Aaronic Priesthood.
- 5 To bless children.
- 6 To take charge of meetings.
- 7 To administer to the sick.
- 8 To preach what is taught in the Bible and the Book of Mormon.
- 9 "To teach, expound, exhort, baptise, and watch over the Church."

Assignment: How many of us are really prepared to be standing ministers? Let us begin this week to make more systematic our study of the Book of Mormon.

LESSON ELEVEN

PART ONE

Intercontinental Movements of Book of Mormon People

References: "New Witness for God," Vol. II, Chap. 12,
or M. I. A. Manual No. 7.

- I Movements of Jaredites and Mulekites.
- II Movements of Nephites After Joining People of Zarahemla.
 - A Movements southward.
 - B Reasons for these movements.
 - C Expedition to Zeniff.
 - 1 History and outcome of this expedition.
 - D Expedition of Ammon.
 - E Missionary expeditions.
 - 1 Ammon, Aaron, Omner and Himni.
- III Movements Northward.
 - A Advantage of the narrow neck of land.
 - B First important migration northward.
 - 1 Introduction of shipbuilding.

- C Second important migration northward.
 - 1 Probable cause.
 - 2 Probable extent of Nephite population at this time.
- D Invasion of the Lamanites.
 - 1 Nephites driven from the south.
 - 2 They regain part of lost territory.
- E Effect of robber wars.
- F Effect of the cataclysms on the population.
- G Effect on political and social conditions of Christ's appearance.

Suggestive Truth : Book of Mormon migrations were for the same causes as migrations in other lands and were therefore natural and authentic.

PART TWO

Privileges and Duties of the Elder (Continued)

- I In Presiding.
 - A Elders to conduct meetings as directed and guided by the Holy Spirit. (See Doc. & Cov. 45: 2.)
- II Commandments to be Observed.
 - A Not to cast anyone from public meetings.
 - 1 Exceptions.
 - B Must ask God to direct.
 - 1 In all things.
 - 2 That proper spirit might influence.
 - 3 That improper spirits may not seduce. (See Doc. & Cov. 46.) Read carefully the entire Sec.

Assignment : What is meant by conducting meetings as directed by the Holy Spirit? What about following an "order of business"? Show how this may be done under the same influence.

In what way should the presiding officer utilize the time of the meeting? State how much time is wasted in meetings. How can this waste of time be remedied?

LESSON TWELVE**PART ONE****Subject: Government and Religion**

References: "New Witness for God," Vol. II, Chap. 13
M. I. A. Manual No. 7.

- I** The Jaredites.
 - A Foundation and nature of government.
 - B Religion of the Jaredite peoples.
- II** The People of Mulek.
 - A Government.
 - 1 Foundation and character.
 - B Religion.
 - 1 Lack of writings of any kind.
 - 2 Effect on language, religion, morals.
- III** The Nephites.
 - A Foundation of hereditary kingdom.
 - 1 Character and extent.
 - B Transformation to democracy.
 - 1 Character and extent.
 - 2 Duty of Judges.
 - 3 Military organization.
 - 4 Nature of laws.
 - C Attempt to change to monarchy.
 - 1 Anarchy.
 - D Tribal government.
 - E Religion of Nephites.
 - 1 Of what it consisted.
 - 2 Rites and ceremonies.
 - 3 Priesthood; how organized.
 - 4 Their description of the coming of the Savior.
- IV** The Lamanites.
 - A Efficiency of their government.
 - B Character of the people.

C Religion.

- 1 Idolatrous.
- 2 Superstitious.

Suggestive Truth: The written word of God is necessary to the full accomplishment of religious ideals.

PART TWO

Privileges and Duties of the Elder (Continued)

I Ordination.

II Other Elders.

A What should be conferred.

- 1 The Melchisedek Priesthood.
- 2 The rights, keys, privileges and blessings pertaining to the office of Elder in the Melchisedek Priesthood.

III Priests, Teachers, Deacons.

A What should be conferred when ordaining.

- 1 A deacon.
- 2 A teacher.
- 3 A priest.
- 4 In ordaining a man to the office of Elder, which form is right—to ordain him an Elder in the Melchisedek Priesthood, or—to confer upon him the Melchisedek Priesthood, and then ordain him to the office?
- 5 What should be said in ordaining a Deacon? A Teacher? A Priest?

Assignment: The privilege of bestowing such great blessings upon the others carries with it an obligation to live an exemplary life. In what way can this be done this week in the home? In business? In the Church?

We will thoughtfully prepare ourselves in the use of words and forms to be used when participating in ordaining other Elders, Priests, Teachers and Deacons.

LESSON THIRTEEN

PART ONE

The Testimony of the Three Witnesses

References: "New Witness for God," Vol. II, Chap. 15,
M. I. A. Manual No. 8.

- I The Importance of These Witnesses.
 - A Prophecies of Book of Mormon.
 - B Number of witnesses.
 - 1 As to the restoration of the Book.
 - 2 Number of witnesses.
 - a Three witnesses.
 - b A "few" others.
- II Conditions and Circumstances Under Which They Obtained View of the Plates.
 - A Promise of the Lord to them.
 - B Joseph's warning to Oliver Cowdery.
 - C Viewing of the plates.
 - 1 Joseph's account.
 - 2 David Whitmer's account.
- III Reading of Testimony.

Suggestive Truth: "In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established."—*Paul*.

PART TWO

Privileges and Duties of the Elder (Continued)
Baptism

- I Purpose.
 - A Generally. References.
- II Preparation.
 - A Of the applicant.
 - 1 What it should be.

B Of the Elder who performs the ordinance.

C As to time and place.

III Forms.

A Memorize the words to be used. (See Doc. & Cov., 20, 72, 73, 74.)

IV Confirmation.

A Two things to remember.

1 To confirm the applicant a member of the Church

2 To confer the Holy Ghost.

Assignment: Every member will learn the proper forms, as given by revelation; each one will also learn the best way to hold the applicant, when the ordinance of baptism is about to be performed.

LESSON FOURTEEN

PART ONE

The Witness, Oliver Cowdery

References: "New Witness for God," Vol, II, Chap. 16, or, M. I. A. Manual No. 8.

I Oliver Cowdery's Character.

A His weaknesses.

B His strength.

II His Testimony of the Book of Mormon

A Stories of his denial of its divinity.

B His own declarations.

III His Later Years.

A Request to return to the Church.

B His dying testimony

Suggestive Truth: A clear conscience and a firm defense of truth under all circumstances always gives a man the greatest contentment in life.

PART TWO

Privileges and Duties of the Elder (Continued)
The Administration of the Sick. A Sacred Ordinance of the Church.

Reference: Doc. & Cov., Sec. 84, 73.

I How Given.

A By revelation. (See *Ref.*)

II Purpose.

A To relieve and comfort.

1 Through faith.

2 Through obedience.

B To promote faith

1 By confirming testimony.

III Proper Occasions.

A As to faith of the sick.

B As to faith of relatives and friends present.

C Necessity of the presence of the Spirit of God.

1 Preliminary prayer.

a When suggested by the Spirit.

2 Antagonistic spirit should not be present.

IV Who Should Take Charge?

Assignment: Let us clearly define in our own minds what conditions should surround and attend the administration of this sacred ordinance,.

LESSON FIFTEEN

PART ONE

Testimony of the Three Witnesses—David Whitmer

References: "New Witness for God," Vol. II, or M. I. A. Manual No. 8.

- I David's Testimony and Life.
 - A Never denied testimony.
 - B His statement misrepresented.
 - C His proclamation.
- II David Whitmer's Death.
 - A Place and circumstances.
 - B His final testimony and words of advice.
- III Review of His Life.

Suggestive Truth: At other times simple and homely, he is said to have become eloquent, and almost divine in appearance when upholding his testimony. Through the power and influence of the Lord, weak men become strong.

PART TWO

Administration of the Sick (Continued)
The Anointing
Privileges and Duties of the Elder (Continued)

- I The Oil.
 - A Pure olive oil.
 - 1 Properly cared for.
 - B The consecration.
 - 1 By proper authority.
 - 2 Places.
 - a Temples.
 - b Testimony meetings.

3 How pronounced. (See note 1)

II The Anointing of the Sick.

A Externally.

1 Care to use proper quantity.

B Internally.

1 Under what conditions.

C How pronounced. (See note 2)

Assignment: All members will familiarize themselves with the essential elements of this ordinance, and be prepared to perform it properly when called upon.

Note 1: The Lord has not revealed any set form to be used in consecrating the oil, and the Church is careful not to adopt stereotyped prayers and blessings that might interfere with the free flow of the Spirit. The Elder therefore, must keep in mind only the power by which and the purpose for which he dedicates, consecrates, and sets apart the oil. It is blessed by the power of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and is to be administered unto those who have faith in the anointing and the administering of the sick.

Note 2: The anointing should be under the direction of the Spirit, and not after the pattern of any set form. This caution however, might be observed: Do not express a confirmation and sealing when naming the purpose of anointing.

It is well, too, to avoid the frequent repetition of the names of Deity. The Savior's name may be used at the beginning or at the close of the blessing, but it is not necessary to use it at both times.

LESSON SIXTEEN

PART ONE

Testimony of the Three Witnesses—Martin Harris

References: "New Witness for God," Vol. II, or M. I. A Manual No. 8.

I His Life With Relation to the Church.

A Never excommunicated.

- B His support of J. J. Strang as Joseph's successor.
 - 1 Mission to England.
- C Years of estrangement.
 - 1 Adherence to his testimony.
- II Rejoins Church.
 - A Circumstances as told by Elder E. Stevenson.
 - 1 First heard Martin's testimony. (Where)
 - 2 His subsequent interest in the Witness.
 - 3 Finds Harris living at Kirtland.
 - 4 Harris expresses wish to join Church.
- III He Comes to Salt Lake City.
 - A Circumstances.
 - B Life at Smithfield, Cache County.
- IV His Death and Reiteration of His Testimony.
 - A Effect of the news that the Book of Mormon was to be published in the Spanish language and carried to the Indians of Central America.

Suggestive Truth: Though naturally of a lax disposition he stood always ready to vouch for the truth of his testimony.

PART TWO

Privileges and Duties of the Elder (Continued) Administration of the Sick (Continued) The Sealing

- I By What Authority.
- II What Are the Essential Things to be Observed?
 - A In pronouncing the blessing.
 - B As to duration of the blessing.
 - C As to the spirit of those participating.

Assignment: We will so live that the power of the Priesthood may be made manifest through our administrations in behalf of the sick and afflicted.

LESSON SEVENTEEN

PART ONE

Reflections on the Testimony of the Three Witnesses

References: "New Witness for God," Vol. II, or M. I. A. Manual No. 8.

- I Consideration of the Trying Circumstances under Which They Lived and Persisted in Their Testimony.
 - A Separation from Joseph's influence and finally from the Church entirely, did not alter their belief in the truth of what they had previously testified to.
 - B Summary of points of their testimony.
 - C No possibility for delusion or mistake.
- II Possibility of Intentional Fraud through Collusion with Joseph Smith.
 - A Circumstances against collusion.
 - 1 Youthfulness of the men.
 - 2 Character and reputation of the men.
 - B Subsequent relations between Joseph Smith and the witnesses.
 - 1 Persistence of witnesses under all conditions.
 - 2 Joseph's discipline shows no fears of the men betraying secrets.
 - C Parallel drawn between their short-comings, after receiving visions, and those of Peter.
- III Return to Church.
 - A Not likely they would return after living away from it so long.
 - B Powerlessness of Church to offer them any worldly recompense.
- IV Contrast Between Works of These Men and Men Who Are Unrighteous.
 - A What they taught.
 - B Character of Book upheld by them.

- C Results of their teachings.
- D Persecutions endured by them.
- V Discussion and Summary of Lesson.

Suggestive Truth: The race is to him that endureth to the end.

PART TWO

Ward Duties of an Elder

I As Acting Teacher.

- A Responsibility.
- B Preparation required.
 - 1 In a knowledge of the Gospel .s
 - 2 In a knowledge of the persons to be visited.
 - 3 In personal conduct.
- C How to visit.
 - 1 To merit confidence of the people.
 - 2 To give aid and encouragement required.

II As a Member of Special Committee.

- A Old Folks' committee.
 - 1 Responsibility.
 - 2 Preparation.
 - 3 Due consideration of duties.
- B Finance committee.

Assignment: If the acting Teacher did his whole duty ably and successfully, what condition would the members of the Church be in? Name the duties of the acting Teacher. Why should he study carefully the dispositions of the people in his district? Show that great wisdom should be shown in the choosing of a time to visit; in length of visit; in method of teaching; in doctrines taught.

What improvements can we make in our visits this week?

LESSON EIGHTEEN

PART ONE

Testimony of the Eight Witnesses

References: "New Witness for God. Vol. II. M. I. A. Manual No. 8.

- I Receiving of the Testimony.
 - A Time and place.
 - B Account by Lucy Smith.
- II The Testimony of the Eight as it Appears in the Book of Mormon.
 - A Different from that of the Three.
 - B Description of circumstances.
- III Subsequent Course of These Witnesses With Relation to Their Testimony.
 - A Christian Whitmer.
 - B Jacob Whitmer.
 - C Peter Whitmer Jr.
 - D John Whitmer.
 - E Hyrum Page.
 - F Joseph Smith Sr.
 - G Hyrum Smith.
 - H Samuel Harrison Smith.

Suggestive Truth: The eight witnesses, standing true to their testimony till their death, added much strength to the testimony of the three witnesses, who never denied it.

PART TWO

Ward Duties of the Elder (Continued)

- I In Auxiliary Associations.

- A As officers.
 - 1 In Sunday school.
 - a Relation of Supt. to Bishop.
 - 2 In Y. M. M. I. A.
 - a Relation to the Bishop.
 - 3 In religion class.
 - a Relation to the Bishop.
- B As members.
 - 1 Duties.
 - a In regard to attendance at meetings.
 - b In regard to preparation.
- C Show that the Elder in holding any position in the Ward is but the representative of the Bishop. What, therefore, will be the benefits of frequent meetings with the Bishopric of the Ward? Show the evils that result from misunderstandings and ill feelings between officers of the Ward. Name the most important means of securing and maintaining unity among ward officers.

Assignment: Can we not as Elders arrange to hold a meeting this week to adjust any difficulties that might have arisen between us and the brethren, or to have a better understanding about the affairs of the Ward organizations to which we belong?

LESSON NINETEEN

PART ONE

Testimony of the Eleven Witnesses

References: "New Witness for God," Vol. II, M. I. A Manual No. 8. Chap. 21.

- I Discussion of the Two Kinds of Testimony.
 - A Divine.
 - B Human.
 - C Purpose of God in giving them.

- II Stand Taken by Critics of the Book of Mormon.
 - A As regards the Three Witnesses.
 - B As regards the Eight Witnesses.
 - III Scientific Explanation.
 - A Hypnotic influence.
 - B Probability of the witnesses being in collusion with Joseph Smith.
 - IV How the One Testimony Supports the Other.
- Suggestive Truth:** A lie is like a drunken man; it cannot stand alone, but the truth will stand forever.
-

Stake Duties of the Elder

PART TWO

- I To Sustain Stake Presidency.
 - A By attending to Quorum Meetings.
 - B By attending Stake Meetings at the call of Stake Authorities.
- II To Act on Auxiliary Boards.
 - A As representatives of Stake Presidency and High Council.
 - 1 In Sunday school.
 - 2 In M. I. A. work.
 - 3 In religion class.
- III To Do Special Missionary Work in Wards.
 - A As appointed by Stake Presidency.
- IV To Assist Stake Presidency and High Council In All General Stake Meetings, Especially Quarterly Conference Meetings. (Doc. & Cov. 20: 61, 62.)

Assignment: How many Elders in this quorum were at the last Quarterly Conference?

Would it not be good for all of us to begin now to make arrangements to have one hundred per cent of our quorum in attendance at the first meeting of next Quarterly Conference.

LESSON TWENTY

PART ONE

The Testimony of Incidental Witnesses

References: "New Witness for God," Vol. II, M. I. A Manual No. 8. Chap. 22.

- I Lucy Smith.
 - A Description and account of the Urim and Thummim
 - B Breast-plate.
- II Parley P. Pratt's account of Father Beaman.
- III Josiah Stohl and Joseph Knight.
 - A Stohl's letter (by dictation) to the Prophet at Nauvoo.
- IV The Direct Harmony of All Incidental Evidence With That of the Three and the Eight Witnesses.

Suggestive Truth: Harmony and not disagreement is produced by truth.

PART TWO

**Subject: Family Duties of the Elder
Responsibility of Fatherhood**

- I The Father's Influence.
 - A As head of the household.
 - B As the boy's ideal.
 - C As the boy's companion. (Note 1.)
 - D In example. (Note 2.)
- II A Knowledge of Pre-existence, Of life as a Probationary State, Of Our Future Relationship, Increases This Responsibility.
 - A Such, the responsibility of the Elder.

Assignment: Discuss the responsibility of fathers in regard to teaching sons to respect the Priesthood. What effect would an Elder's continual absence from quorum meetings have upon an intelligent boy? How may we become more companionable with our boys?

NOTES, PART TWO

Note 1: Edgar L. Vincent in an article on "The Fatherhood of Today and the Manhood of To-morrow" writes interestingly on the influence of the father upon the son. After narrating an instance in which a young man away from home attending a normal school, would "leave all school attractions and fly away homeward the moment the bell rang on Friday afternoon for the last time," he says: "Can it be doubted that a fatherhood so strong, so winning, so all-persuasive as that would have a mighty influence on the life of a young man? If we could have gone back through the years that lay before the boy went away to school no doubt we would have discovered the secret of this impelling force homeward. Beyond question we would have learned that between father and son there had always been the warmest kind of a link, binding heart to heart. Unquestionably we would have brought to light the fact that never a day had gone by without some little heart to heart talk, binding the boy more and more closely to his father, until at last the tie became a veritable chain of steel. What could break such a bond? Does it seem as if anything short of death itself could do it?"

Standing in the presence of a love like this, let us ask whether or not it is easy to find many such cases in our day and age of the world. Just put on your thinking-cap now, and tell us how many fathers you know of that have such a hold on their boys. It would be interesting to know what answer would be made to that question. Perhaps for our own peace of mind and in the interest of the optimism we all so mightily long for, it is well that we can only speculate on what the answer might be. It would be better for the world if in every home a love so strong and confidence so abiding might exist. God give us homes where the fathers are worthy to be loved and trusted by the boys and girls!"

Note 2: "The susceptibility of children to outward influences is largely due to their power of imitation, and this power was doubtless given them for a wise purpose.

"Originality is not a virtue of infancy and childhood. Hence, if we would influence the acts of a child we should set him an example, we should act as we wish him to act. Patient children are never reared by impatient parents.

"Most of the crime and misery of the world are due to the early influences of home. We may not be aware how small an influence may work the ruin of a child when he has inherited slightly vicious tendencies. By nature the disposition of a child is the sweetest thing in the world, and how beautiful, tender, and sweet might become the lives of all if parents were conscious of these truths, and would act according to their knowledge. But they so often contaminate the sweet springs of childhood with the bitterness of their own lives, that we do not wonder that the old theologians so strongly believed in total depravity and innate sinfulness.

"Infancy is neither vicious nor virtuous; it is simply innocent, and is susceptible alike to good and bad impressions.

"Its safety consists alone in the watchfulness of its guardians. The soldier has his hours of duty, but the parent to whose hands is intrusted the guardianship of an immortal soul is never off duty. When the baby is asleep all the household move softly lest they awake him; but when he is awake they should move and think and speak more softly lest they awaken in him that which no nursery song can lull to sleep again.

"The young child is an apt student of human nature. You do not deceive him as you perhaps think. The knowledge of human nature, of the motives that impel us to actions, comes not from reason nor from observation. It is an intuitive knowledge and is always keen in the child. It acts, too, with far greater vigor between child and parent, especially the mother, than between the child and others. Every look of the mother's eye is interpreted by her child with far greater accuracy than the most profound student of the anatomy of expression could interpret it.

"The sharpest merchant may not detect the sign of dishonesty in the father's face so quickly as the child.

"*Parents*, your child is a bound volume of blank paper on whose pages are to be written the record of your lives. Be careful then what you allow to be written there, for the world will read it. Do you not see that through this principle by which you are instinctively *en rapport* with your child, an awful responsibility is thrown upon you? The secrets of your inmost soul are the copy which the trembling hand of your child is trying to write.

"The word "influence" is the most incomprehensible, the most vast and far-reaching in its significance, of all words. We seldom use it in any but a literal sense, but in every degree of its true meaning there is the shadow of infinity.

"Philosophers tell us, not in jest, but in the profoundest earnestness, that every footfall on the pavement jars the sun, and every pebble dropped into the ocean moves the continents with vibrations that never cease. Your hand gives motion to a pendulum, and in that

act you have produced an effect which shall endure through eternity. The vibration of the pendulum as a mass ceases, but only because its motion has been transformed from mass motion to molecular motion. Had it been suspended in a vacuum and been made to swing without friction at the point of suspension, it would have vibrated on forever, but the friction, which is inevitable, and the resistance of the air, gradually bring it to rest, and we say the motion has ceased. But this is not true. The motion has not ceased; it has simply become invisible. At every vibration a part of the motion was changed at the point of suspension and in the air into the invisible undulations of heat and electricity. A moment ago the pendulum was swinging, but now infinitely small atoms are swinging in its stead, and the aggregate motion of all those atoms is just equal to the motion of the pendulum at first. These waves of atomic motion expand and radiate from the points of origin, extending on and on and on, past planets and stars, beating and dashing against their brazen bosoms as the waves of the ocean beat the rocky shore.

"This is not the language of fancy; it is the veritable philosophy, the demonstrated facts of science. Your will gives birth to motion communicated along the nerve of your arm to the pendulum, and that motion has gone past your recall, on its eternal errand among the stars. What a solemn thought! You are the parent of the infinite!

"And yet this illustration but faintly shadows the awfulness of human influence. If a simple motion of your hand is fraught with eternal consequences, what shall we say of the influences of your mind? They shall live as long as the throne of the Infinite. Oh, that we might impress upon the minds of mother and father the awful truth that an influence in its very nature is eternal. Not a word or thought or deed of all the myriad dead but lives today in the character of our words and deeds and thoughts. We are the outgrowth of all the past, the grand resultant of all the world's past, the grand resultant of all the world's past forces. Only God can measure the influence of a human thought."

"No stream from its source
Flows seaward, how lonely soever its course,
But what some land is gladdened. No star ever rose
And set without influence somewhere. Who knows
What earth needs from earth's lowest creature? No life
Can be pure in its purpose and strong in its strife,
And all life not be purer and stronger thereby."

Extract from "Our Home."

LESSON TWENTY-ONE

PART ONE

Origin, Translation and Final Disposition of The
Book of Mormon

References: "New Witness for God," Vol. II, M. I. A.
Manual No. 8. Chap 23.

I The Ministration of Angels Not Unscriptural Nor Unreasonable.

- A Attitude of the world toward the miraculous.
- B Many incidents found in the New Testament.
- C Savior's promise of angels in the future.
- D John's visions.
- E Comparison between conditions of earth and the probable conditions existing in other planets than ours.
 - 1 Man's power of motion.
 - 2 Power of communication, etc.

II Belief and Media in Ascertaining Divine Knowledge Is Neither Unscriptural Nor Unreasonable.

- A Such media existed in bible times.
- B Man uses many articles to aid him in scientific researches which might be compared (in a poor way) with the Urim and Thummim.
 - 1 Eye of man.
 - 2 Telescope.
 - 3 Lens.
 - 4 Photograph.
- C Comparison of these instruments (invented by man) with the instruments selected by a Supreme Intelligence.

III The Returning of the Book of Mormon to Moroni.

A Reasons for:

1 Incredulity of outsiders.

B Man required to exercise faith.

C Fate of mummies and papyrus from which Book of Abraham was translated.

IV Loss of One Hundred and Sixteen Pages of Manuscript.

A What they were.

B How lost.

C Discussion

Suggestive Truth: Discrediting a statement by those who can not comprehend it, would have no effect on the truth of that assertion. Denial of the existence of angels by anyone is insufficient evidence to prove that they do not exist.

PART TWO

Family Duties of the Elder (Continued)
Responsibilities of Fatherhood (Continued)

I In teaching The First Principles of the Gospel.

A Repentance.

B Faith.

C Baptism.

D The gift of the Holy Ghost.

E Prayer. (See Doc. & Cov. 68: 25-29.)

F Reverence for Sabbath day.

Assignment: (1) Discuss the proper time to talk to the family on these matters. (2) Many homes in the Church have a reading half-hour before breakfast. Is this practicable in all homes? (3) Discuss the danger of *boring* children with this "set" teaching. How can this be avoided? (4) Let us make a start this week to introduce into our homes the teaching of the Gospel. We will report next meeting.

RELIGION IN THE HOME

"The time was when home was everything, church, state, school, factory and social club. Larger developments necessitated new methods. One man became a shoemaker for the community, another a weaver, another a carpenter, and another a teacher. Thus we have our highly complex civilization with division of labor as one of its marked characteristics.

"We smile at the manner of doing things in primitive times; but it is well to remember that in some respects the primitive is the ideal and departure from it a deterioration.

"The home is in danger of becoming a mere place in which to eat and sleep. This is especially true in the city.

"It is not possible or desirable to grind our own grain, weave our own cloth, or make our own shoes, nor can we expect to give the children their education in the home. But it is very desirable that we should not depend solely upon outside agencies for all that is needed in the religious life. In the estimation of many parents the Church and Sunday School are institutions to which may be delegated the entire work of religiously instructing and, they hope, of saving, the children. They put out to others the family washing, the family sewing, and—the family religion.

"The world needs more home-made characters. There may not be quite the finish and polish but there is a ruggedness and strength which no outside training can give.

"Parents who have low ideals of parental responsibility and authority will scarcely be able to lead their children to love and obey God. Again I say, the parents—not one but both—must stand to the child in the stead of God, until the child is old enough to come into conscious, personal relation with God. This office should not be delegated to others, nor should anyone be allowed to usurp the place of parent.

"The parent must be a teacher. There is the unconscious teaching by look, act, and word—all spontaneous. There should be deliberate, premeditated teaching as well, and preparation for it. Clothing and food are provided and prepared for the children—they are not left to chance or convenience. The physical life receives due attention, but too often the development of the higher nature is entirely neglected. The true perspective of existence is lost, the present is allowed to eclipse the future; bodies are developed and souls are dwarfed. Life here means more when it is linked to the life beyond. True religion makes one more of a man, it deprives him of no true good and adds to him the best. Religion sweetens, strengthens, elevates home life. It pushes back the horizon of existence and makes one to live in a larger world.

"The Bible is our great but much neglected text-book. Our children grow away from it in the public schools. New text books are continually taking the place of the old, only to become old themselves in a short time, and be replaced by others. But here is the same old text-book which our parents and grandparents studied, and until it has been demonstrated that nobler character than theirs can be developed through the use of some other text-book, we decline to make a change. The permanency of the text-book leaves us no excuse for not keeping abreast of the development of our children and guiding that development as related to their highest nature.

"The best trained teacher can never relieve the parent of the grave responsibility and God-given privilege of being the spiritual guide of the child. But, Alas! So many give their children no religious instruction at home, and give no heed to what they are taught elsewhere. In many cases it is due to a feeling of incompetency, but the chief cause is indifference. Incompetency can be remedied by resolute action. Incompetent housekeepers have, by determined thought and work, become charmingly efficient. They have set themselves to learn the art of home-making and house-keeping and have mastered it." Extract from "Our Home."

LESSON TWENTY-TWO

PART ONE

Book of Mormon Civilization—Jaredites

References: "New Witness for God," Vol. II, Chap. 24
M. I. A. Manual No. 8.

- I Introductory.
- II Book of Mormon Requirements as to Location of Jaredite Civilization.
 - A Who Jaredites were .
 - B Arrival on shores of promised land.
 - C Land of Jaredite inheritance.
- III Extent and Nature of Jaredite Civilization.
 - A "Desolation."
 - B Moron.
 - C Extent of Empire.
- IV Nature of Industries and People.
 - A Buildings.
 - B Industries.
- V End of the Jaredites.

Nephites

- VI Book of Mormon Requirements as to Location of Nephite Civilization.
 - A Nephites depart from Jerusalem.
 - B Journey and landing.
 - C Contentions and separation.
 - 1 Nephites.
 - 2 Lamanites.

VII Spread of Nephites Northward.

- A Causes.
- B Settlement of valley of the Sidon and union with Mulekites.
- C Spread of peoples northward.

VIII Extent and Nature of Nephite Civilization.

- A Wars.
- B Shipbuilding.
- C Buildings.
- D Industries.

IX Requirements as to Character of People.

- A Origin.
- B Order of civilization.
- C Knowledge of Mosaic institutions and ancient history.
- D Signs of Messiah's birth.
- E Mixtures of monuments with those of Jaredites.
- F Comparison of Bible and Book of Mormon external support.
 - 1 Lack in Book of Mormon monuments.
 - 2 Comparative youth of our Book of Mormon records as against those of the Bible.

Suggestive Truth: God exalteth a nation and evil men proceed to debase it.

PART TWO

Family Duties of the Elder (Continued)
Responsibility of Fatherhood In Educating
Children (Continued)

I By Personal Instruction.

A In the principles of the Gospel. (See Les. 19.)

B In regard to sex hygiene. (See Note 1.)

1 How this should be done.

2 When it should be done.

3 False modesty.

4 True modesty.

II By Giving Opportunities for Scholastic Training.

A In the grades.

B In the Academy.

Assignment: Discuss the best means of teaching children sex hygiene. Discuss the value of Church school education.

NOTES, PART TWO

Note 1: It is the duty of fathers to give their boys instruction upon this most vital subject. Fathers should encourage their sons to confide in their parents. When a young man feels discouraged or distressed either physically or mentally he should find a sympathizing companion and true friend in his father. When this companionship does not exist between father and son, there is something wrong.

LESSON TWENTY-THREE

PART ONE

Subject: American Antiquities

References: "New Witness for God," Vol. II, M. I. A. Manual No. 8. Chapt. 25.

- I Probable Intercourse Between Eastern and Western Shores During Jaredite and Nephite Times.
 - A Probable visits of other peoples.
 - 1 Norsemen.
 - 2 Celtic adventurers.
 - 3 Pacific Islanders.
 - 4 Across Behring Straits.
 - 5 Phoenicians and Carthagenians.
 - 6 Comparative briefness of records.
 - B Probable visits of Jaredites and Nephites to Europe.
 - 1 Silence of records.
 - 2 Briefness of records.
- II Lamanite Civilization Since Nephite Period.
 - A Latter-day Nephites and Lamanites.
 - 1 How classed after return to evil doing.
 - a Nephites.—(Christians.)
 - b Lamanites.—(Persecutors.)
 - 2 Final corruption of the Nephites.
 - a Center of population at this time.
 - b Spread southward.
 - B Condition after destruction of Nephites.
 - 1 Destruction of evidences of civilization.
 - 2 Strife among the Lamanites.

- 3 Ultimate tendency to better things.
- 4 Revival of civilization.
 - a As found by the Spaniards in Peru, Mex. etc.
 - b Spain's fate to ruin a civilization greater than her own
- C General appearance of City of Mexico during early Spanish times.

III Writers on American Antiquities.

- A Reliability of writers.
 - 1 Questions confronting them.
 - 2 Theories advanced.
 - 3 What to guard against in considering various theories.
 - 4 Destruction of many Aztec manuscripts.
 - 5 What is said of the writing of the Aztecs.
 - a Baldwin.
 - b Los Casas.
 - 6 Native writers following the conquest.

Suggestive Truth : A boastful nation may fall and its deeds go to oblivion and forgetfulness.

PART TWO

Family Duties of the Elder (Continued) Family Prayers

- I Purpose.
 - A Worship.
 - 1 To teach the Gospel.
 - B To promote unity and harmony in the family
 - C To promote order and system.

II The Prayer.

- A Language used with respect to simplicity, directness and reverence.
- B Duration.
 - 1 Effect of very long prayers on children.
 - 2 What should ordinarily be included in family prayers?
- C Best time for praying.
 - 1 The relative merits of holding prayer before and after meals.
- D Best place for prayer.
 - 1 Merits of setting apart one room for the purpose.
 - 2 The advisability of using the kitchen.
- E The relation of family prayers to private prayers.
 - 1 Can the former be said to be a substitute for the latter?

Assignment: The family prayers will be observed this week as strictly in harmony with the spirit and purpose of this sacred duty as we can possibly observe it, in regard to regularity, order, presence of all members of the family, nature of the prayer, etc.

LESSON TWENTY-FOUR

PART ONE

Evidences of American Civilization

References: "New Witness for God," Vol. II, M. I. A.
Chap. 26, Manual No. 8.

I Introduction.

II Evidence of Existence of Ancient Civilization on This Continent.

- A Among the Mayas.
- B The Aztecs.
- C The Peruvians.

III Chief Centers of Ancient American Civilization.

- A Uxmal.
- B Copan.
- C Palenque.
- D Peru

Suggestive Truth: "Nations melt from power's high pinnacle, when they have felt the sunshine for a while, and downward go."

PART TWO

Family Duties of the Elder (Continued)
Care of Home—Decorations and Furniture

I Effect on Family.

- A What faults would you point out in over-ornamented houses?
- B What is likely to be the effect of too severely plain home and furniture?
- C What objectionable things have you noticed in pictures, calendars, post-cards and photographs in the home?

II Cost of Decorations and Furniture.

- A Is it proper under any circumstances to go beyond our means in building and furnishing our homes? Why?
- B In what way can a father or son assist in making the home more attractive with little cost?
 - 1 In pictures and furnishings.
 - 2 In lasting qualities.

Assignment: My home shall be furnished and decorated within my means, for the enjoyment of my family, and with the idea of developing character.

LESSON TWENTY-FIVE**PART ONE****Antiquity of American Ruins**

References: "New Witness for God," Chap. 27, Vol II, M. I. A. Manual No. 8.

- I** Theories Advanced by Historians as to Age of Ruins.
 - A General decay.
 - B Vegetable growth.
 - C Worn condition of pavement.
 - D Native traditions.
 - E Unsatisfactoriness of conclusions reached by disputing authorities.
- II** Successive Civilizations.
 - A Apparent proofs of more than one people

- 1 Differences in plan and workmanship in many monuments.
- 2 Apparent differences existing between Copan and Utatlan.
- 3 Native traditions, hieroglyphics, etc.
- 4 Known wide differences in languages.

III Peruvian Antiquities.

- A Where found.
- B Extent.
- C What Spaniards found.
- D How these conditions corroborate the Book of Mormon.
- E Explanation of the difference found between the architecture of North and South America.

IV Ruins of Mound Builders.

- A Where found.
- B Description.
- C Classification.
- D Opinion as to their origin, use, and antiquity.

V Conclusion.

- A Peoples of both continents.
- B Location of monuments.
- C Requirements of Book of Mormon Fulfilled.
- D Successive civilizations.
 - 1 Comparisons.
- E Chief center of civilization.

Suggestive Truth: There existed in ancient times in America successive civilizations as revealed by the ruins.

PART TWO

**Family Duties of the Elder (Continued)
Caring For Surroundings of the Home****I The House.****A Advantages of being well painted.**

- 1 As to color.
- 2 As to preservation of the wood.

B Repairs.

- 1 What obligation have we to conserve our property and our means.

II The Yards.**A Front yards.**

- 1 Suggest some inexpensive ways by which the front yards of the home can be made attractive.

B Back yards.

- 1 How can back yards be kept in a sanitary condition.?
- 2 How can children be of assistance in keeping yards neat and clean?
- 3 How far are we justified in interfering with the sanitary conditions of our neighbors' yards?
- 4 Can you suggest a community plan whereby the front and back yards of our public places can be made sanitary and attractive? If so, state the plan.

Assignment: We will make our homes sanitary and attractive and do our part to improve the conditions surrounding our public places.

LESSON TWENTY-SIX

PART ONE

Subject: American Traditions

References: "New Witness for God," Vol. II, Chap. 28. M. I. A. Manual No. 8.

I General Traditions.

- A What one would expect to find in the traditions of a people descended from Jaredites and Nephites.

II Traditions on the Creation.

- A "Popol Vuh," what it is.
- B "Popol Vuh," on the creation.
 - 1 Compare with account in Genesis.
- C Prescott on the Aztec religion.
- D Tradition of Cioacoath. ("Our Lady and Mother")
 - 1 Bequeathing of the sufferings of childbirth to women.
 - 2 The plucking of the forbidden rose.
 - 3 Two sons. (Cain and Abel)

III Traditions of the Flood.

- A Widespread belief in flood.
 - 1 Coxcox and wife.
 - 2 Tezpi and his animals.
 - 3 Various other names and traditions, found among the various tribes, concerning their Noah.

Suggestive Truth: Their knowledge of the most important Bible events would prove that the Indians must have had records of these events.

PART TWO

Life and Conduct of the Elder
Obligations to Parents and Family (Except Fatherhood)

I Natural Obligations to Parents.

- A Gratitude for life and being.
- B Obedience.
- C Love.

II Duties Sometimes Overlooked.

- A Personal habits in the home.
 - 1 Cleanliness.
 - a Of person face, hands, finger-nails, etc.
 - 2 Purity of speech.
- B Manners in the home. (Note 1)
 - 1 Politeness.
 - a To parents. (Note 2)
 - b To all members of the family, especially to the younger members. Why?
- C Spending evenings at home.
 - 1 How this may be done.
 - 2 What it means to family.

Assignment: Will any of the following suggestions help us to improve our conduct in our own homes this week?—
(1) If you have wronged anyone, be willing and quick to apologize. (2) Never enter your own house without first removing your hat. (3) If you find it necessary to interrupt another member of the family who is speaking, first excuse yourself. (4) Wranglings and contradictions are violations of etiquette. (5) “Make the

comfort and welfare of others a prime object of your life, and you will thereby fulfill all the requirements of etiquette.” (6) “Let your recreations be manful, not sinful.”

NOTES, PART TWO

Note 1: “He who feels that because he is at home he may act as he chooses and throw off all restraints of politeness and good manners, generally finds that when he comes to put on these restraints for special occasions, they don’t fit, and it becomes evident that the harness wasn’t made for him. Such men when they are occasionally compelled to go into society, experience pain and embarrassment enough to outweigh the cost of being decorous and mannerly at home.”—Extract from *Our Home*.

Note 2: “He who does not love, respect, and reverence his mother is a boor, whatever his pretensions may be. He who can allow any other woman to crowd from his heart the love for his mother does not deserve the affection of any woman.—*Our Home*.

LESSON TWENTY-SEVEN

PART ONE

American Traditions (Continued)

References: “New Witness for God,” Chap. XXIX,
Vol. II, M. I. A. Manual No. 8.

III The Tower of Babel.

A Temple of Cholulua.

1 Tradition concerning it.

B Seven Toltics.

1 Confusion of tongues.

- C Dove distributing languages.
 - 1 Probable significance.
- D Choluluan tradition as told by Duran.
- E Conclusions to be drawn from above.

IV Migrations.

- A Confounding of tradition relating to migrations.
 - 1 Jaredite.
 - 2 Nephite.
 - 3 Mulekite.
 - 4 Local migrations.
 - a After Cumorah disaster.
 - 6 Lamanite or Aztec southward.
- B Necessary variations in traditions owing to oral transmission.
- C Agreement of these traditions with Book of Ether's account of Jaredite migration.
 - 1 Smallness of original party.
 - 2 Ability to understand one another.
 - 3 Character of travels and hardships experienced.
 - 4 Kind of land found by the Jaredites.
- D Peruvian tradition concerning youngest son.
- E Tradition of "Golden Wedge."
 - 1 Suggestive of "Liahona."
- F Description of Toltec nation.
 - 1 General appearance.
 - 2 Intelligence.
 - 3 Industries.
 - 4 Use of metals.

Suggestive Truth: The Lord protects His people and His Word in many wondrous ways.

PART TWO

Life and Conduct of the Elder (Continued)
Testimony of the Gospel**I Nature and Definition.**

- A What do you understand by a testimony of the Gospel?
- B How distinguished from belief?

II How Acquired.

- A Effect of prayer.
 - 1 Kind of prayer.
- B Effect of miraculous demonstrations.
- C Effect of right living and obedience to Priesthood.

III How Preserved.

- A Effect of active participation in Church duties.
 - 1 Can a man preserve in its fulness his testimony of the Gospel without performing his duties?
- B Effect of speaking well of or criticising Church authorities.
- C Right living and service in the work of the Lord.

IV How, When, and Where Born.

- A In public meetings and places.
- B In private.
 - 1 To families and children.
 - 2 To friends and associates.

Assignment: We will strengthen and preserve our testimonies by the service we shall render in the Cause of Truth.

LESSON TWENTY-EIGHT

PART ONE

American Traditions (Continued)

References: "New Witness for God," Vol. II, Chap. 30,
M. I. A. Manual No. 8.

I Signs of Messiah's Birth.

- A Division of kingdom by Acxopil.
- B "Day when three suns were seen."
- C The second age.
 - 1 Darkness and hurricanes.

II Signs of Messiah's Death.

- A Lamanite prophet's signs as found in the Book of Mormon.
- B Fulfillment of predictions.
- C Toltec tradition.
 - 1 Year Ce Calli.
 - 2 Significance of Mexican exact chronology.
- D High civilization of Peru at this time.
- E Native's terror of darkness and rejoicing at promise of continued light.
 - 1 Significance of same as regards Book of Mormon history.

Suggestive Truth: Tradition preserves enough of the truth that men may by study see through them what once was.

PART TWO

Life and Conduct of the Elder (Continued) Personal Purity

I In Thought.

- A "As he thinketh in his heart, so he is." Prov. 23:7
(See Note 1.)
- B Value of right thinking.
 - 1 In affecting the disposition.
 - 2 In forming moods.
 - 3 Effect upon associates.

III In Actions.

- A How it affects children.
 - 1 Children born imitators.
- B How the boy looks upon his father's actions.
 - 1 "I'll take what father takes."
- C Responsibility of father.
 - 1 Discuss the best ways of cultivating pure thoughts.
 - 2 Can you think of any duty that an Elder has to perform which does not encourage right thinking?
 - 3 Discuss the effect of vulgar stories, and "smutty yarns."
 - 4 Think of the father's responsibility in this regard
 - 5 Show how futile a father's teachings are to his son when he preaches one thing and practices another.

Assignment: Let us introduce into our lives "plain living and high thinking," and by this example teach our boys to do the same.

NOTES, PART TWO

Note 1: "But the thing a man does practically believe, (and this is often enough without asserting it to himself, much less to others), the thing a man does practically lay to heart, and know for certain concerning his vital relations to this mysterious Universe, and his duty and destiny there, that is in all cases the primary thing for him, and creatively determines all the rest. That is his religion, or it may be, his mere scepticism and no-religion; the manner it is in which he feels himself to be related spiritually to the unseen world or no-world; and I say, if you tell me what that is, you tell me to a great extent what the man is, what the kind of thing he will do is." Carlyle.

LESSON TWENTY-NINE**PART ONE****American Traditions (Continued)**

References: "New Witness for God," Vol. II, Chap. 31,
M. I. A. Manual No. 8.

- I** Messiah in the Western Hemisphere.
 - A Book of Mormon account of His appearance.
 - B Chance of confusion, in traditions, of this personage with other great leaders among Jaredites and Nephites.
- II** Traditions of Culture. Heroes in Giral.
 - A Sudden appearance among people.
 - 1 Various names .
 - 2 His description.
 - B His teachings to the people.
 - C Sudden disappearance.

D Comparison with Book of Mormon account.

III Votan.

A Resemblance to Moriancumer.

B Resemblance to Nephi I.

1 Time and manner of coming to this continent.

2 Those led here and his writings.

3 Parts of legends which more resemble Christ.

4 Evident confusion of traditions.

IV Peruvian tradition of Messiah.

A Appearance among men.

B Description.

C Teachings and miracles of this personage.

V Topilitzin Quetzalquatl.

A Various names given to this same personage

B Many qualities of the Deity ascribed to him and his resemblance to Messiah on this continent.

C Characteristics which do not resemble Christ.

D Summing up of the great many points brought out in these traditions which agree with Book of Mormon account.

Suggestive Truth : Though somewhat mixed with other events, still their accounts of Christ's appearance is convincingly realistic.

PART TWO

Life and Conduct of the Elder (Continued)
The Law of Tithing

- I Latter-day Saints to be Tithed. (Doc. & Cov, 64: 23, 85: 35, 119: 1-7.)
- II Its Philosophy as a Saving Principle.
 - A A manifestation of faith.
 - B A love of God, above the regard for earthly comforts
 - C Its effect in developing strength of manhood.
 - D Its relation to testimony.
- III Blessings Gained by Obedience. (Doc. & Cov, 64: 23, 85: 3.)
 - A What is a full tithing?
 - B Discuss the paying of tithing, as a manifestation of faith.
 - C As an expression of love for the Lord and His work.
 - D No man has ever lost anything by paying tithing.
 - E Discuss the loss by not doing so.
 - F How does the paying of tithes strengthen the character?

Assignment: Let each one find out this week how he stands in regard to this important principle.

LESSON THIRTY

PART ONE

Hebrew Origin of the Indians

References: "New Witness for God," Vol. II, Chap. 30.
M. I. A. Manual No. 8.

I Introduction to Subject.

A Discussion of various writers quoted.

II Garcia.

A His comparison of indians and Jews in:

1 Character, dress, religion, physical peculiarities, conditions, customs, etc.

B How he accounts for difference in language.

III Lord Kingsborough's views.

A His comparison of the religion of Mexican Native and the Jew.

1 Deity, together with many lesser personages.

2 Similarity in myths concerning Babel, flood, creation, etc.

3 Use of blood sacrifices.

4 Temples.

5 Traditions of the splitting of the waters; of the strife in Heaven; temptation of the woman.

B Comparison of dress; duties of priests; superstition; signs; laws; architecture; habits; etc.

IV Adair.

A Similarity in tribal organization.

B Religious ceremonies.

- C Similarities in language.
- D Recoming of time.
- E Character and disposition.
- F Other ceremonies and customs.

Suggestive Truth: People of common characteristics, traditions, language, etc., must have had a common origin.

PART TWO

Life and Conduct of the Elder (Continued) **The Word of Wisdom**

- I What It Is.
 - A A principle with promise. (Doc. & Cov. 89.)
 - B A command of God.
- II "Strong drinks."
 - A What this includes.
 - 1 All alcoholic drinks.
 - B Not good for man.
- III Hot Drinks.
 - A Tea, coffee, etc.
- IV Tobacco.
 - A Its proper use.
 - B Its improper use.
- V Flesh.

A When to be eaten.

Show that if this principle were strictly observed by every Elder in the Church that the observance would preach to the world a most effective sermon on the efficiency of Mormonism.

Show how character is strengthened by obedience to this principle.

How weakened by not obeying it.

Assignment: If we have not already done so, let us commence to-night to keep the Word of Wisdom.

LESSON THIRTY-ONE

PART ONE

Discoveries of Hebrew Relics

Reference: "New Witness for God," Vol. II, Chap. 33.

I The Pittsfield Hebrew Parchment.

A Story of discovery.

B How translated.

II The Newark Hebrew Tablet

A Story of discovery.

B Description of tablet.

C Translation.

III Discussion of the significance of these relics .

IV The Cincinnati Gold Plate.

A Story of discovery.

B Description of plate and characters.

C Action taken by Parley P. Pratt.

V The Kinderbook Plates.

- A Story as published in *Quincy Whig*.
- B Story as published in *Times and Seasons*.
- C Joseph Smith's statement concerning them.

VI Passage from "Adair's History of the North American Indians."

- A Plates discovered and described.
 - 1 Five copper plates.
 - 2 Two brass plates.

Suggestive Truth: The Lord chooses His own time for discovering new evidences to His work.

PART TWO**Life and Conduct of the Elder (Continued)
Courtship—The Boy****I Age.**

- A What can be said of the advisability of very young boys having "steady girls"?

II The Boy's Opportunities.

- A To what extent should he be given the privilege of becoming acquainted with girls?
 - 1 In public places.
 - 2 In private homes.
 - 3 Which of the two places is preferable? Why?
- B How can a young man learn of the real character of the girl he loves?
 - 1 What things should be taken into consideration by him? Why?

III The Boy's Parents.

A Their counsel and advice.

1 Its advantages.

B What care should be exercised by parents?

C To what extent are fathers and mothers entitled to investigate the love affairs of their sons?

Assignment: A perfect confidence will be established between fathers and sons respecting these matters.

LESSON THIRTY-TWO

PART ONE

Minor Coincidences—Race Unity

References: "New Witness for God," Vol. II, Chap. 34,
M. I. A. Manual No. 8

I Central and Western New York Ancient Battlefields.

A Mr. Priest's description of old battlefields.

B Articles found there together with many graves.

C Location of great battlefield of the Book of Mormon.

II Did Joseph Smith compile the Book of Mormon pages from the writings of other English historians?

A Almost impossibility of task for a well educated man

B Extreme youth and comparative ignorance of Joseph Smith.

C Non-existence of these histories.

D Very few works then in existence on subject.

- 1 American Antiquarian Society, translations and collections.
- 2 "View of the Hebrews; or the Tribes of Israel in America."
- 3 American antiquities and discoveries in the west
- 4 The history of the American Indians.
- 5 Translation of parts of Humbolt's works on New Spain.

III Race Unity.

- A Comparison of Book of Mormon incidents with native American traditions.
- B Blood-thirstiness of the Lamanites; also of part of the people in native traditions.

IV Apparent relationship noticed among natives.

- A Unlike any other known races.
- B Similarity between various tribes.
- C Derivation of languages from one common mother tongue.

Suggestive Truth: When the Lord's people forget Him and become proud and stiff-necked, corruption, followed by destruction, speedily overtakes them.

PART TWO

Life and Conduct of the Elder (Continued) Courtship (Continued) Consideration for the Girl

- I Proper Manners and Restraint.
 - A In public places.

- 1 What is the effect of too great familiarity.
 - a Upon the girl.
- 2 What element of weakness is shown in so called "spooning" in public?
- B In private.
 - 1 What are the dangers in a lack of propriety.
 - 2 Is it not a good rule to follow: That every boy should treat a girl as he would wish his sister to be treated?
 - 3 Discuss the abuses indulged in buggy-riding, bob-sleigh-riding, etc.
 - 4 What can be said of the advisability of having chaperons with young men and women?
 - a For the girl's good name and reputation.

II The Girl's Parents.

- A What consideration is due them.
 - 1 As to securing permission for girl to leave home.
 - 2 As to keeping respectable hours at her home and away from it.
 - 3 As to the proper treatment of their daughter on all occasions.

III The Girl's Religion.

- A What is our teaching on this point?
 - 1 Do we indorse and believe in it?
 - 2 Why do so many of our boys marry girls out of the Church?
 - 3 Can a remedy be given?

Assignment: Every young man will treat the girl with whom he associates as he would have his own sister treated.

LESSON THIRTY-THREE**PART ONE****Evidences of the Truth of the Book of Mormon
External Evidences (Continued)**

References: "New Witness for God," Vol. II, Chap. 35,
M. I. A. Manual.

Evidence of the Bible**I The Place of the Patriarch Joseph..**

- A Promises to him and his seed as found in the Bible.
- B How Book of Mormon history fulfills these promises.

II Isaiah's Prophecies Concerning Coming Forth of Book of Mormon.

- A Bible prophecies.
- B Book of Mormon prophecies.
- C Comparison between Jewish history and Nephite history.

III Prophecies of Messiah concerning "Other Sheep."

Suggestive Truth: God is mindful of His children no matter where they may be scattered.

PART TWO**Life and Conduct of the Elder (Continued)
Marriage—Legal Status****I A Contract.**

- A Parties to the contract.

- 1 The man.
- 2 The woman.
- 3 The State.
- 4 Qualifications of the man and woman.
 - a Must have arrived at the ages prescribed by the laws of the State where they are married.
 - b Must be of sound mind.
 - c Must not be related within certain prescribed degrees of consanguinity.
 - d If the parties have not attained their majority they must secure consent of parents.

II The Marriage.

- A Must be preceded by a license to marry, obtained from proper authority.
- B The ceremony may be performed only by one authorized by law and upon presentation of a license.

III Obligations of Marriage.

- A To live together.
- B The husband to support the wife and maintain a home for her and children.
- C The wife to perform the usual duties of a wife for the husband and children.
- D To be faithful and true to each other.
- E The State, being a party to the marriage and interested in its results will enforce its obligations and prevent the marriage from being dissolved except for causes prescribed for divorce.

Assignment: We will understand and live up to the requirements of the marriage contract. (A treatise on Marriage can be obtained from any law library.)

LESSON THIRTY-FOUR

PART ONE

Internal Evidences
Book of Mormon Consistent With Theory of Its
Construction in Style and Language

Reference: "New Witness for God," Vol. II, Chap. 37

- I Unity and Diversity of Style.
 - A Classes of writings in make-up.
 - 1 Original, unabridged Nephite records.
 - 2 Mormon's and Moroni's abridgment of Nephite and Jaredite records,.
- II Consideration and comparison of style.
- III Characteristics of an abridgment.
- IV Originality in Book of Mormon Names.
 - A Jaredite proper names.
 - B Nephite proper names.
 - C Names of cities and lands.
 - D Names of coins.

Suggestive Truth: The Book of Mormon, in style and language, is not unnatural. The human element in it is an evidence of its divinity, since it is so much in accordance with human experience

PART TWO

Life and Conduct of the Elder (Continued) Marriage as Regarded by the Church

- I Ordained of God. (Doc. & Cov. Sec. 49: 15-17. Gen. 2: 18.)
- II Object of Marriage. See Note 1. (Art. of Faith, p. 455, par. 18, 19.)
- III Eternity of Marriage Covenant. (Doc. & Cov, Sec 131: 2; 132: 19-26, 46-48.)
- IV Duties of Husband and Wife. (Doc. & Cov, 42:22, 23:8
 - A In supporting each other in family government.
 - B In considering each other's welfare and happiness.

Assignment: Discuss the sacredness of the marriage bond. Can you think of anything that should be more sacred? When a father kindly chastises a child and the mother openly sympathizes with the child, what is the effect? What is the effect when it is "vice versa"? Which is the more important, to give a child a physical body, or to develop its spiritual nature? Show the necessity of nurturing both.

NOTES, PART TWO

Note 1: (Articles of Faith, p. 455, par. 18, 19.)

Marriage: (par. 18.) The teachings of the scriptures concerning the necessity of marriage are numerous and explicit. "The Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone;" This comprehensive declaration was made concerning Adam, immediately after his location in Eden; Eve was given unto him, and the man recognized the necessity of a continued association of the sexes in marriage, and said: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh." Neither of the sexes is complete in itself as a counterpart of God.

Of the creation of human kind we read: "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them." The purpose of this dual creation is set forth in the next verse of the sacred narrative: "And God blessed them; and said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth." Such a command would have been meaningless and void if addressed to either of the sexes alone; for only by the union of both is the propogation of the species possible. And without the power of perpetuating his kind, how insignificant would appear the glory and majesty of man. How little can be accomplished by the individual within the limited range of a single mortal existence."

(Par. 19.) Grand as may seem the achievements of a man who is truly great, the culmination of his glorious heritage lies in the possibility of his leaving offspring from his own being to continue, perchance, the triumphs of their sire. And if such be true of mortals with respect to the things of earth, how transcendently greater is the power of eternal increase, as viewed in the light of revealed truth concerning the unending progression of the future state.

Truly, the apostle was wise when he said: "Neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord."

LESSON THIRTY-FIVE

PART ONE

Internal Evidences (Continued)

Reference: "New Witness for God", Vol. II, Chap. 38.

I Book of Mormon Forms of Government: Consistent With Times and Circumstances of Their Existence.

A Monarchies.

1 Jaredites.

2 Nephite.

3 Lamanite.

B Reign of Judges—Republic.

C Ecclesiastical government.

II Harmony of Book of Mormon events with character of the Writers.

A Purpose for which Book of Mormon was written.

III Harmony between complexity of structure and Theory of Origin of Book of Mormon.

Suggestive Truth: Government is made for men—not men for government; and is an outgrowth of experience varying in different times and under different environment.

PART TWO

Life and Conduct of the Elder (Continued)
Marriage in the Temple

I One of the Privileges of the Elder.

A How regarded.

1 By men who look upon marriage as the end.

2 By men who appreciate it as a privilege

II Preparation Necessary.

A Personal habits.

B As between the man and the woman.

1 Both should be true and pure.

III The Sacred Covenant.

A For time and eternity.

B Obligations.

1 On the part of the man.

2 On the part of the woman.

3 Marriage in the Temple is not the end of an Elder's duty. It may be but the beginning.

Elders who fail to continue in their calling after marriage, do so, surely, either because of ignorance of their duties or because of wilful neglect. In either case they are answerable for their conduct.

Assignment: On eternal covenants, read the following sections in the Doctrine and Covenants: You can do it before the next meeting. 1:15, 22; 1-3; 45: 9; 49: 9; 66; 2; 76; 101: 78:11; 132:4-27; 41, 42.

LESSON THIRTY-SIX

PART ONE

Originality of Book of Mormon in Support of Its Claims

Reference: "New Witness for God," Vol. II, Chap's. 39, 40.

- I In Structure.
- II In Names.
- III In Manner of Coming Forth.
- IV In Account of the Peopling of America.
- V The Nativity of American People.
- VI Accounting for the Existence of Christian Ideas in America.

Suggestive Truth: The search in the Book of Mormon for evidence of its divinity will not prove fruitless to the honest investigator.

PART TWO

Life and Conduct of the Elder (Continued)
Early Marriages**I The Marriageable Age.****A Among the Romans.**

- 1 "The age of consent was fourteen for males, and twelve for females."

B Among the Jews.

- 1 About the same age as that among the Romans.

C In the United States.

- 1 "Age of consent" varies generally from sixteen to twenty-one for boys, and from fourteen to eighteen for girls.
- 2 An early marriage in Utah is from eighteen to twenty-three for boys, and from sixteen to twenty-one for girls.

II Wisdom to be Exercised.**A In choosing a companion.****B In regard to health and physical development.****C In regard to natural affinity ,love, etc.****D Choice should be made in harmony with the promptings of the heart, the dictates of reason, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.****III Advantages of Early Marriages.****A Love intuitions are pure, and generally pretty safe guides.****B The mission of life is begun when God intends it to be.****C Natures and dispositions blend more easily than in later life.**

- D If not too early, an early marriage is conducive to health.
- E When properly made and solemnized, it always produces happiness.
- F Gives parents the best years of their lives to provide for their family.
- G Enables father and mother to be more congenial companions to youth and maidenhood.
- H Fulfils the great law of being.

Assignment: If there are any unmarried men in our quorum or if we have marriageable sons or brothers, we will do all we can to teach them the importance and sacredness of the law of marriage, and influence them to obey it.

NOTES, PART TWO

Note: When there are no natural conditions forbidding the union of two whose natures, tastes, and desires are congenial, financial circumstances should not postpone the marriage any length of time. The young man who can not or *will* not support a wife ought never to marry; the young man who can and will ought to marry early, whether he has much to start on or not.

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Divine authenticity of the
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